

Sports Illustrated

APRIL 14, 1960

\$1.25

LOOK WHO'S BACK!

MUHAMMAD ALI

[with mustache]



A man in a red jacket is climbing a rope ladder from the side of a boat. The boat is white with a red stripe and is in the middle of a rough sea with white-capped waves. In the background, there are red, rocky cliffs under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The man is looking back over his shoulder towards the camera.

No compromise

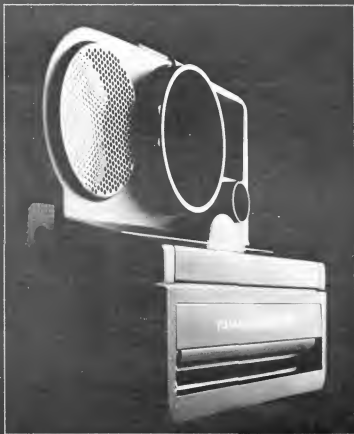
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But there is one. Polaroid's SX-70 Sonar. It has everything Pronto Sonar has and more. Single-lens reflex viewing, closeup capability to 10.4 inches. And it

folds down to a slender, compact 1 by 4 by 9 inches handsomely covered in genuine leather and brushed chrome. And naturally, it's more expensive.

So when you consider the fact that you can own a Pronto Sonar for about half as much as an SX-70, it could make you think twice about which one to buy.

But the only way you might go wrong is not buying either one.

Polaroid's Pronto Sonar

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Sears

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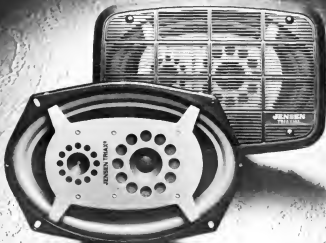


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VIEWPOINT

by MICHAEL BAUGHMAN

A FORMULA TO LIFT THE SPIRITS AND BEAT INFLATION: GO BACK TO NATURE

I've taken so many camping trips in my life that the memories of most of them have merged and blurred in my mind. There were two trips, though, that I'll never forget, because I think they demonstrate the extraordinary range of possibilities open to Americans who want to enjoy the out-of-doors.

A few years ago a friend invited my son and me to go with him to visit 2,000 acres of land that he owned east of the town of Red Bluff, Calif. This was Yahi Indian country, where Ishi—the last wild Indian in North America—was discovered just over half a century ago.

We drove down the old Lassen Trail for the first 15 miles out of Red Bluff, and it was tough country even for our Jeep. When we could drive no farther, we hiked in a few more miles over steep hills and difficult ridges. Though the three of us were in good physical condition, we were exhausted when we finally found a suitable campsite—an Indian cave at the edge of a steep cliff, high above a clear, fast-flowing creek. It was obviously a cave that the Yahi had used, because its roof was blackened with soot from campfire smoke and a perfectly formed bowl had been carved into its stone floor.

We slept on that floor and lived on dried fruit that we'd brought along and trout that we caught in the creek on dry flies. Our firewood and water had to be hauled up to the cave each day, a steep climb of more than an hour. The mountains and cliffs were dotted with caves and, between fishing expeditions, we explored a number of them. In one we discovered wooden drying racks that the Yahi had used for fish and venison perhaps 100 years ago. In the three days we camped there we saw hundreds of deer. The only sounds—besides our own voices and footsteps—were the creek, the wind, the large coveys of mountain quail and occasional owls. Once, at night, a cougar screamed.

The second trip also lasted three days. A friend who owned a large camping trailer invited my wife and me to join him, and we camped about 200 miles south of the Yahi cave, in Yosemite National Park.

Upon entering the park on a Friday morning, we were greeted by a traffic jam complete with screaming, red-faced drivers, blaring horns and exhaust fumes. Though it was still early summer, our campsite had already been so heavily used that the grass had been worn away and the earth pounded into dust. But we slept and dined in comfort, eating elaborate meals cooked over a stove that was

continued



at least as large as the gas range in our kitchen at home. The fishing we did was for stocked trout, and the favored baits were marshmallows and cheese balls. On a long hike we saw some spectacular country, a lot of people and one lost dog, a howling Labrador. The sounds to which we became accustomed over the three-day period were of radios and record players, an electric guitar, portable generators, trail bikes and, of course, the thousands of recreational vehicles that streamed along the well-paved roads. Once, at night, a woman screamed. We later learned she had cut herself with an electric carving knife.

Thoreau drew the obvious conclusion long ago: "Most of the luxuries, and many of the so-called comforts, of life are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind." Aldo Leopold comes closer to the central point when, in *A Sand County Almanac*, he relates this doctrine of simplicity specifically to nature. The value of an outdoor experience, he contends, is in direct proportion to the degree of contrast it affords us with our daily lives. In other words, we go out into nature to temporarily escape the complexities of civilization and, in the process, refresh and renew ourselves. But by dragging a 40-foot trailer full of civilization with us and parking it in an outdoor ghetto, are we not defeated before we begin? Thus, not surprisingly, I found my trip to Yahi country exhilarating despite the hardships—or, rather, because of them. And modern-day comforts and conveniences were largely responsible for making our Yosemite excursion unsatisfying.

While not everyone is willing or physically able to endure the hiking and hauling required to visit a remote area like Yahi country, some sort of wilderness is accessible to nearly everyone. Campsites that offer no amenities except a place to pitch a tent—perhaps near a stream or lake—can be enormously pleasant to an inexperienced, less confident camper without causing him extreme hardship. At the end of a day spent fishing or simply exploring, easy conversation around the campfire is infinitely more enjoyable than watching battery-powered television inside a motor home.

What is it that has led so many American campers to forsake the tranquility celebrated by Thoreau and Leopold in favor of driving eight-mile-per-gallon motor homes along smoggy freeways to overcrowded campgrounds and parks? Blame it on frenzied growth. One clear indication of the increase in outdoor recreation in this country is the fact that the operating budget of the National Park Service the year after World War II ended was \$5 million. In 35 years that budget has increased to more than \$500 million.

The manufacturing of recreational equipment also reflects this fantastic growth. After World War II we became a nation of consumers with a lot of free time on our hands, and the people who make motor homes, four-

continued

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VIEWPOINT *continued*

burner camp stoves, trail bikes and motorboats are like the people who make most anything else—they will produce and sell us whenever they are able to convince us we should have.

But now, with the increase in the price of oil and gasoline, and the inflation resulting from it, there's a shortage of spending money. More or less coinciding with our economic problems—and in some ways related to them—there has been a gradual change in the attitudes of both the government and private sectors in regard to the administration of public lands. Though this may be bad news for the makers and sellers of recreational vehicles and related gadgetry, it could be beneficial for our national parks and the people who use them.

Yosemite may lead the way toward a happier future for those who wish to truly experience the out-of-doors. A master plan for Yosemite has been drawn up by the Park Service with considerable help from the public, and its goal is to enhance the natural beauty of the park by reducing automobile use.

Under the plan, day visitors would be required to leave their vehicles in lots and travel through Yosemite by bus, and a limit would be set on the number of people allowed in each day. Because 90% of the park's visitors spend most of their time in the seven square miles of Yosemite Valley (the total park is 1,189 square miles), the Park Service hopes eventually to exclude all private vehicles from this area.

More stringent rules have been established for overnight use, too, and a system of permits and reservations will cut down the long lines of vehicles waiting for vacancies.

Another plan to reduce overcrowding will involve \$100 million in private funds. The Park Service feels that its stores, warehouses and offices in Yosemite Valley are largely responsible for the congestion there, and it hopes to demolish some of the buildings and relocate the facilities on less scenic ground, perhaps beyond the park boundaries. The Park Service will not ask Congress for the funds needed to relocate the buildings. Instead, a private nonprofit organization called the Yosemite Institute will attempt to raise the money for the project. Then the Federal Government will lease the facilities, gradually repay the \$100 million along with interest and eventually reassume ownership of the facilities.

It remains to be seen whether these plans will be implemented and how the public will accept them if they are. I think many people will heartily approve. And I hope that Yosemite's effort will inspire similar plans elsewhere. I'd like to believe that the tread back toward the concepts expressed by Thoreau and Leopold has only begun.

I've always wanted to return to Yahi country, now another trip to Yosemite has strong appeal, too.

END

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A LOT OF RESPONSIBILITY.
AND A LOT OF
PRIDE IN MYSELF."**

Sgt. A Steven Hight, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma

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10 mg. "tar", 0.8 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report MAY '78.

SCORECARD

Edited by JERRY KIRSHENBAUM

FRUSTRATION

The U.S. Olympic Committee's 482-member House of Delegates will consider action on President Carter's proposed Olympic boycott at its annual meeting in Colorado Springs this weekend. By way of helping that body make up its mind, Sears, Roebuck and Co. last week said it would withhold payment of a \$25,000 pledge to the USOC unless the committee supports the boycott. Although Sears officials denied that the White House had applied undue pressure, they allowed that Presidential Assistant Anne Wexler had requested in a phone call to Board Chairman Edward R. Telling that the contribution be delayed. With the USOC's fund-raising efforts already slowed by the boycott movement, Sears' announcement distressed Olympic Committee Executive Director F. Don Miller, who accused the company and the White House of "sheer blackmail."

The Administration's frustration on the Olympic issue was plainly showing in all this. With Soviet troops still occupying Afghanistan, it might be construed as a sign of weakness for the U.S.—and in an election year, for Carter—to relax opposition to participation in the Moscow Games. Nevertheless, amid signs that public support for Carter's Olympic stand may be eroding, the USOC has been stepping up its resistance to a boycott.

Although USOC officials said a few weeks ago that they would go along with the President's determination of "what's best for the country," they more recently have been saying that they would support a boycott only if Carter termed such a move a matter of "national security," which would appear to be an overstatement of what has been advanced essentially as a symbolic protest. The USOC has meanwhile argued that the U.S. shouldn't commit itself to a boycott when so few other countries seem willing to do so—even though the Administration maintains that many of those other countries are waiting for the U.S. to act first

It is debatable whether the USOC's delaying tactics justify the strong-arm methods the White House apparently used in the Sears case. The Administration is now said to be considering other extreme measures to prevent U.S. athletes from competing in Moscow, including currency restrictions, revoking the USOC's tax-exempt status and legislation giving the President sole authority for sending teams abroad. Another sign that the boycott movement may be faltering is the widespread lack of enthusiasm for the White House's proposal for an alternative Olympics, which now gives every indication of being a dead issue. One more telling development, Administration officials, among them Defense Secretary Harold Brown, were saying last week that, yes, a USOC refusal to support a boycott would indeed damage national security.

MASTER OF THE MASTERS

Finishing among the top 24 at the Masters guarantees a golfer an invitation to the tournament the following year, and for the average touring pro, cracking that select company is quite an achievement. Clearly, Sam Snead is not average. Snead has placed in the select 24 at least once in each of the five decades of the Masters' existence—the '30s, '40s, '50s, '60s, and '70s. He was 18th in 1937 and 20th in 1974, with two dozen other top-24 finishes in between, including three victories. By comparison, Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson were top-24 finishers in four decades, and Arnold Palmer and Julius Boros, among others, in three each.

This week in Augusta, Snead, age 67, goes for a sixth decade. Chances are he won't make it, but no matter. Just by competing in the tournament in a sixth decade he will set a record that may well stand forever.

UP FRONT, PLEASE

NBA and NHL teams have, as usual, raised ticket prices for the playoffs. The Atlanta Flames, who charged an \$11 top

for regular-season games, have increased prices by 25% for the first round of Stanley Cup play (to a \$13.75 top) and by 50% for subsequent rounds (to \$16.50), assuming, of course, that the Flames get that far. The Philadelphia Flyers hiked prices from \$11.50 for top-scale seats during the regular season to \$17.25 in the playoffs, also a 50% increase.

Besides raising prices, some clubs required purchasers to buy blocks of tickets for all possible playoff home games—and to pay in advance. For example, Atlanta Hawk fans had to lay out anywhere from \$102 to \$150 for the dozen games their team theoretically could have



played at the Omni. But the Hawks could be eliminated after as few as two home games, at which point fans would specifically have to request a refund for unused tickets. Otherwise, the money would be applied toward the purchase of season tickets for 1980-81.

Few clubs received a bigger playoff windfall than the Washington Capitals, who fell just short of gaining their first Stanley Cup berth in their six-season history. The Caps sold playoff tickets and required fans to buy blocks of them covering 14 home games even though, as things developed, the most home games they could possibly have played had they made the playoffs was 11. Cap fans grumbled about this and also about the fact that the deadline for mailing payment for those 14 games—totaling \$168 for a top-priced seat—was March 21, 16 days be-

continued

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And you can get a turbo-charged V-6† on certain select models of Chevrolet and Buick.

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Plenty of room, too...

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A whole family of responsive V-8's.

In addition to our exclusive V-6 entries, GM also builds the largest family of responsive V-8's in the business.

On our mid-size cars they range from 4.3 liters to 5.7 liters.



Look into buying or leasing.

We think the message is clear. If you're thinking of going mid-size with your next new car, remember this:

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Everything you ever wanted in a balata ball. Except balata.

On the Tour, they never noticed it wasn't balata.

Dunlop developed the Black Max XLT-15™ ball for one reason.

The Tour.

But we not only built Tour-tight specifications into the ball. We also kept a tight lip—giving it to Tour pros without a word about the cover. What happened?

Nothing.

The pros assumed they were playing a pure balata cover ball.

The XLT-15 isn't just a Tour ball. It's a Tour winner.

When we let it be known the XLT-15 ball wasn't balata, the Tour players using it full time let it be known they didn't care.

All they cared about was the feel, the accuracy, the spin, the controlled distance and trajectory.

Plus one other thing—the XLT-15 had become a Tour winner.

The Miracle Blend.

At the top of the page, you see

three types of wound golf ball covers.

The conventional Surlyn® cover is thick, stiff, very durable—and not very responsive. It spins slower; flies lower.

The conventional balata cover is thin and sensitive. It spins fast, flies high (sometimes too much so), and cuts.

The XLT-15 Miracle Blend cover captures the best of both. Much thinner than Surlyn® it has the power, the feel, and the impact-reaction that Tour pros used to playing balata insert upon.

Plus durability that means who plays balata is used to.

The only real distance is accurate distance.

The XLT-15 is more than long. Its unique Aerodyne® dimple system also provides

superb accuracy, with classic trajectory and "action."

The same cannot be said of all aerodynamic design Tour balls. And the long and short of it is, good, low scoring golf is not the product of distance, alone.

Total performance. A bit more durability. No compromises.

On the Tour, golf is no game, but a deadly serious business.

Durability means nothing. Performance, on the other hand, is everything.

And on the Tour, you'll find players who use no other ball.

So if you feel you've been sacrificing performance to durability, stop. The XLT-15 offers everything you ever wanted in a balata ball.

And more than you ever expected.

BLACK MAXFLI XLT-15.
THE MIRACLE BLEND.

DUNLOP



*Surlyn is a registered trademark of the I. I. DuPont Company.

fore the conclusion of the regular season and nearly 10 weeks before May 29, the latest possible date on which the Stanley Cup finals could end. Now, Cap fans wanting their money back will have to apply for refunds.

Insistence on payment in advance gives poor teams a nice chunk of up-front money to invest at record interest rates or to apply to outstanding notes. Which raises a question: Why shouldn't interest on playoff ticket money accrue to the fans rather than the clubs? Offering an answer, Jerry Buss, the owner of the Los Angeles Kings and Lakers, proves that the playoffs bring out the best in the numbers men as well as the players. "Let's say I charge \$15 for a playoff ticket," Buss says. "Say I make a dollar in interest. If I charge you \$15 and send you \$1 back, that's a lot of effort for both of us and very costly. So I just charge \$14."

JESSE & JOE

The death of Jesse Owens last week at 66 evoked a flood of memories. Of "that incredible day of days in track and field history," as Norris McWhirter, editor of the *Ginness Book of World Records*, refers to May 25, 1935, when Owens broke five world records in Ann Arbor, Mich. Of the races a barnstorming Owens won against horses in Cuba, victories that documentary filmmaker Bud Greenspan attributes partly to the none of the starting gun, which usually frightened the horse into near paralysis. And, of course, of Owens' heroics at the 1936 Olympics.

Inevitably, Owens' death also made people think about his friend Joe Louis, who became world heavyweight champion less than a year after Owens won his four gold medals in Berlin. As the *Chicago Tribune's* David Condon reflected last week, Owens and Louis both starred in individual sports that commanded worldwide attention—and did so at a time when many other sports were closed to blacks. While Owens' triumphs at the Olympics enraged Adolf Hitler, Louis' victories came at the expense of a succession of so-called "white hopes." Both athletes were men of considerable dignity, and while they later were scorned as Uncle Toms by younger militants, they remained sources of pride to blacks of their generation. Finally, Condon wrote, a case can be made that each was the alltime best in his field.

Louis was born eight months after Owens. Confined to a wheelchair because

of a stroke suffered in 1977, Louis was at ringside in Las Vegas last week for the Larry Holmes-Leroy Jones WBC title fight wearing a narrow-brimmed brown hat. At one point a young girl in his party playfully grabbed the hat, prompting Louis to snatch it back. There was one moment, though, when Louis readily removed the hat and held it with great solemnity in his lap. It was when the P.A. announcer called for a moment of silence in memory of Jesse Owens.

THE BIG FIX

Last week, following a 32-day trial at which convicted master fixer Anthony Ciulla (51, Nov. 6, 1978) was the chief government witness, a U.S. district court jury in Harrisburg convicted six men and acquitted six others on charges of conspiring to fix horse races at Pennsylvania's Pocono Downs in 1974. Along with guilty pleas entered earlier by four defendants (three others charged in the suit are fugitives, while two defendants were severed from the case because of illness), the verdict brought to 36 the number of people who have either pleaded guilty or been convicted on charges relating to race fixing in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Michigan largely as a result of Ciulla's testimony.

What was significant about the Pennsylvania proceedings was that seven of those who pleaded or were found guilty were jockeys. Six jockeys had been convicted or pleaded guilty in a state court in New Jersey, but until now the Federal Government had been more successful in prosecuting gamblers and alleged organized-crime figures than jockeys. The government confined its case in Harrisburg to 47 of some 100 races at Pocono Downs that Ciulla claimed to have fixed. Besides those jockeys indicted in the case, the government implicated 13 other riders, several of whom testified for the prosecution.

As described by the government, Ciulla's operation at Pocono Downs involved a small army of jockeys, many of whom are still riding. It is now up to the Pennsylvania Racing Commission to take appropriate action against them, but if that body is anything like state commissions in New Jersey and Massachusetts, little will be done, sorry to say, to follow up the leads suggested by Ciulla's testimony.

Ciulla has not made his last courtroom appearance. In Detroit, where Jockey Billy Phelps and two other men have al-

ready pleaded guilty, another jockey, a trainer and two other men accused by Ciulla are currently on trial in a federal court. In New York, former jockey Con Errico was indicted last month on a federal racketeering rap charging that he bribed jockeys on nine occasions at Aqueduct and Saratoga in the mid-70s. Ciulla has said that he misinterpreted the alleged fixes and that Errico was a go-between with the jockeys. Although no jockeys were named in the Errico indictment, this much is certain: somebody rode the horses in those races. And it wasn't 320-pound Tony Ciulla.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Some of the nation's top crews regularly train and compete on such heavily polluted waters as the Charles (Harvard) and Schuylkill (Penn.) rivers. This is one reason many rowers look forward to San Diego's prestigious annual Crew Classic, which was scheduled to be held last weekend on Mission Bay. After all, that body of water is relatively clean—or at least it was until last winter's heavy rains sent raging torrents through San Diego's canyons, cracking sewer pipes and releasing raw sewage into the bay. Because bacteria counts were running 15 times higher than normal, beaches and launching ramps were closed to the public.

Last month, when the first of an expected 1,200 rowers from Harvard, Penn and a host of other colleges and rowing clubs were about to arrive for the Classic, the bay was still so foul that health officials ruled that oarsmen could not make bodily contact with the water. Local rowers got permission to go out in their shells, but only after wrapping their legs in plastic trash bags. Some of them took the added precaution of wearing wet suits. Promoters finally decided to cancel the Classic. That, no doubt, saddened the fellow who had urged in a letter to *The San Diego Union* that the races be allowed to go on, reasoning that the polluted waters would have made many of the participants "feel right at home."

THEY SAID IT

- Don Carter, professional bowler: "One of the advantages of howling over golf is that you very seldom lose a bowling ball."
- Jim Bakken, former Cardinal placekicker, at a dinner roasting St. Louis' 280-pound guard, Bob Young: "For his salad, you just put vinegar and oil on your lawn and let him graze."

END

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Sports Illustrated

APRIL 14, 1989





THE LATEST FROM THE GREATEST

He may be way out of shape and 38, but an \$8 million purse beckons, and so Muhammad has gone to the mountain **by PAT PUTNAM**

The vanguard of Muhammad Ali's clan was gathering. Lana Shabazz, the camp cook, was seated at a long planked table preparing lunch. With her in the log house that serves as kitchen and dining room were Jimmy Ellis, the former WBA heavyweight champ who had been promoted from sparring partner to assistant trainer; Abdul Rahaman, the tough security chief once known as Captain Sam; and Howard Bingham, the photographer. Drew Brown, known

continued

as Bundins, had had a big night and was still sleeping in one of the camp's 14 log cabins. Those in the room all wanted to know one thing: Who was Ali going to fight, Larry Holmes or Mike Weaver?

That he would fight again was all too apparent. He was there, wasn't he, there in his \$500,000 training complex high on Sculp Hill overlooking Deer Lake, Pa. The three-time heavyweight champion had arrived the night before, in the backwoods darkness of last Friday, and he had just climbed from the Paul Bunyanesque bed in his private cabin. "Too late to run," Ali decided, a grin accenting his new mustache. Then he yawned.

With her gleaming knife poised over a large carrot, Lana eyed the sleepy Ali. "Who you going to fight?" she demanded with finality.

Ali's answer was distorted by another yawn. "The Marine," he said.

Ellis' eyes widened. "Who?" he asked, surprise lacing his voice. "I thought you were going to fight Holmes."

Ali shook his head, the electric light picking up the gray advancing through his hair. "Nah. I'm going to fight the Marine. Then I'm going to beat up on Holmes."

Lana was still a little puzzled. "Which Marine?"

"The one that just knocked out John Tate," Ali said. "Mike Weaver. Weaver the Beaver."

The carrot was halved by a sharp stroke from Lana's knife. "You got to whip him," she said with concern.

Sighing, Ali lifted the front of his brown warm-up jacket. Thick coils of mudsuction spilled into view. Ali clutched fistfuls of the offending flesh. "Ain't this disgusting? I can't hide it no more. I don't want to hide it no more. Going to get rid of it."

An hour later Ali, idle these past 18 months, took the first step in what he knew would become three months of agony, self-imposed torture, as he pushed himself to sculpt his 38-year-old body into fighting trim.

"So he's really gone back to the mountain," said Angelo Dundee, the little trainer Ali will soon beckon from his home in Miami. "I never thought he'd do it. I really believed that before he fought again the mountain would have to come to him."

His boxing trunks tugged high as he sought to cover the jiggling jelly roll. Ali came into the gym for his first workout

at Deer Lake. He walked past the speed bag. The heavy bag remained unused. Instead he pointed toward Henry Clark, a used-up journeyman, and climbed gracefully into the ring, where, like beached whales, the two floundered through a couple of rounds.

"Just warming up," said Ali, panting heavily as Ellis towed sweat from his face. "You next," Ali growled, pointing toward a slender youth, who eagerly reached for a battered head guard.

As he had for his historic second fight with Leon Spinks, Ali has once more imported light and fast sparring partners from the amateur ranks. "He needs those little guys," Dundee explained. "He is going to look slow as hell but they'll bring out all the speed and reflexes he's got left. He won't look like much for five weeks, but then watch him."

The youth Ali had beckoned was Charles Carter, a 21-year-old welterweight from Yakima, Wash., with an 84-14 record and cobras for hands. "I'm going to put a real whuppin' on you, boy," Ali threatened.

"What you're going to do is learn my name," the unwary Carter responded.

Even when he was young and trim, which was about three Presidents ago, sparring was never one of Ali's more ardent pursuits. He can get in more loafing during 10 rounds of ring work than most people could manage in the same time while stretched across a bed.

Midway through the second round Carter began to challenge him: "Come on, old man, let's see you fight." Later Carter would explain, "I wasn't trying to be a wise guy. I was just trying to get him to work. He was loafing. I was trying to get him up on his toes."

As penalty for his rashness, Ali made Carter work six full rounds. "You know my name now?" Carter gasped when it was over.

"Get back in here, boy," Ali yelled at him. "You ain't done."

Carter flew across the ring, got in two quick flicks and then darted between the ropes. Ali laughed. He worked two more rounds with Roosevelt Green, a young welterweight, before packing it in.

In the dressing room Ali fell backward onto a couch. His eyes closed. "God, 10 rounds and I'm exhausted," he moaned. "Ten rounds?"

"What you expect, you're just in off the street," Rahman told him. "No more sparring," Ali said.



Rahman nodded his approval. "I hope not."

"Tomorrow I got to work."

"All you were doing today was telling your body it was time to go back to work," Rahman said. "You was just getting rid of the laziness."

"I hope so," Ali said. He sounded semi-convinced.

Even at the advanced age of 38 and carrying more suet than sinew, Ali induced a wild scramble among promoters when he announced he was ready to put up his fists once more. The winner appears to be Murad Muhammad, an obscure fight poddler out of Newark, N.J., whose chief claim is that he promoted all of James Scott's light-heavyweight fights at Rahway State Prison.

Bob Arum, who holds the options for Weaver's next three fights, had offered Ali \$4.5 million for his comeback in New Orleans against John Tate. That looked like the fight until March 31, when Weaver craved the Tennessee grant from the WBA's championship roster with one short left hook (page 20).

Don King, the orator who decides the ring fortunes of WBC champ Larry Holmes, had countered with an offer of \$7 million. But that offer was set for self-destruct: King had offered Holmes only \$3 million.



Ali says he isn't just playing out the string, and his fans at Deer Lake seem to be in agreement.

"To hell with that," stormed Richie Gischetti, Holmes' manager. "Don said we should give Ali the most money. Why? We've got what he wants. We should get as much and more, and Larry feels the same way. If Ali gets \$7 million, then we get \$7 million. And that's the way it is." By week's end King reportedly had withdrawn his offer to Ali.

Dr. Ferdie Pacheco, Ali's personal physician for many years, said, "I don't see any helter-skelter race to the bank to get the money out. I hear about all those million-dollar offers, but a lot of that talk is like Miami Beach mortgage money. It's all on paper."

But while Arum and King were out shaking the money trees, Murad Muhammad, 29, who was once an Ali bodyguard, set off on a six-day transcontinental trip that netted him \$10 million in backing from a California firm called Prime Corp.—reportedly a mining business—and the apparent acceptance of Ali vs. Weaver. In giving Murad Muhammad the rights to Weaver's first defense, Arum will get a percentage of the TV revenue, whether it be network or closed circuit.

If the complex package doesn't unravel, which has been known to frequently happen in boxing, Ali will be paid a record \$8 million, while Weaver will earn \$2 million. Scheduled for July, the fight

is supposed to be held in the 165,000-seat Stadium Maracana in Rio de Janeiro. On April 3 in Chicago, Ali was given \$250,000 by the Prime Corp. people, which he will keep even if the deal should die.

When Holmes received word that it apparently would be Weaver and not he who would be fighting Ali, he wasn't disappointed. "Ali's not crazy," Holmes said. "He doesn't want to fight me. I used to be his sparring partner and I had to hold back. I thought I could beat him then. Now I know I can beat him. But as a friend I have this advice for Ali: You don't need all those houses and cars. If you're broke, sell the houses and the cars. You can do other things. Don't swallow your pride just to make some money. Don't get into the ring."

"You can't beat nobody—well, you can beat Weaver, he's a plodder. I just hope you haven't sold your pride and sold yourself and your family out. Let your kids have their pride. They could be the proudest kids in America because their father was the greatest fighter who ever lived. Don't take that away from them."

Ali's decision to return to the ring actually was made five months ago, about 30 seconds after Tate decisioned Gerrie Coetzee in South Africa to claim the WBA title Ali had just abdicated.

"When I realized what had hap-

pened," says Ali, who had watched the fight on television, "I yelled, 'I'm back!' I knew I could beat Tate."

His young wife Veronica wasn't all that ecstatic. "If you are going to do it, do it," she told her husband. "But I don't like it."

Ali was so excited about the prospect of winning the title for a fourth time that last November he went to the Main Street Gym in Los Angeles and sparred with Eddie (The Animal) Lopez, a vicious gym fighter who had once knocked out Bernardo Mercado during a workout.

Ali went in looking like a balloon. Time and again Lopez berated him as a fat old man. As the first round ended, Ali ripped off his headgear and snarled, "You want to fight? Then let's fight!"

For the next two rounds it was the old Ali fighting inside a fat man's body. Firing dazzling combinations, he assaulted the stunned Lopez with controlled fury. And when he was done, Lopez told him, almost reverently, "Hey, man, I was only kidding."

Not until March did Ali return to a gym. He worked several days at the 5th Street Gym in Miami Beach. On the fourth day he received a cut in the corner of his upper lip. It required six stitches outside, four inside, but Ali insists he didn't grow the mustache to hide them.

Dundee sees the split lip as a blessing: "After the cut he went to work. In just that short period he got down to 242 pounds."

At camp last Friday, Ali said he weighed 248. It may be the truth or he may have forgotten to weigh one of his legs. Dundee says it doesn't matter.

"The weight is no problem," says the man who has trained Ali since his third pro fight. "The pounds will come off. If he stays in camp, if he runs and eats properly and exercises, then he'll get into shape. But he won't want to run. You've got to push him. You say, 'O.K., go get knocked out.' Then he'll run. He's got to force himself to stay in camp. In the past he always found nine million excuses to go somewhere. That's bad. But if he stays in camp he can do it. Nobody else could at his age, but he can. But will he do it? That's the question."

Pacheco foresees only disaster. In 1977, after 12 years with Ali, he quit when Ali refused to retire. Nothing that has happened since has changed the doctor's mind.

"Eight million is hard for anybody to

continued

turn down," Dr. Pacheco says. "But his wife, his mother, me, even Don King are telling him not to fight. He trained in Miami and didn't look good. That cut. Ali never cut. He's like us all; he's getting old. There is a loss of muscle tone, of elasticity of the skin. As happens to all of us, his face is falling. The tissues of his face are sagging. It's a time in life when plastic surgeons reap the benefits and old fighters begin to cut."

Floyd Patterson, the former heavyweight champion, who fought until age 37, echoes Pacheco. "I've been hit when I was young and when I was old," he says, "and the punch that didn't leave a scratch when I was younger left a gash when I was older. He's taking a hell of a gamble at an age when the reflexes slow and the legs aren't what they used to be. But Ali is extraordinary. He brainwashes himself into believing he can do something, and it usually ends up that he does it. But you can't brainwash yourself into being young again."

For his part, Weaver isn't thinking of Ali's sagging facial features, or of his slowing reflexes, or of the legs that seemed to have been robbed of their extraordinary lightness. Ali is Weaver's idol. He has been ever since he first won the title in 1964, the year Weaver was 11.

"I like him and I love him," Weaver says. "I don't want to fight him, but I will if I have to. I won't like it before the fight and I'll hate it after the fight, but during the fight when I'm beating up on him I won't think about it."

If the fight comes off, Ali gives Weaver no chance.

"He got beat nine times by a bunch of bums," says Ali. "And he was losing big to Tate until he got lucky with one punch. I see him as my tune-up for Holmes. Weaver would give me my timing back. I want Holmes bad. He told me to stay in my rocking chair. Well, I'm going to get out of my rocking chair and beat his butt bad. Hell, Holmes is 30. That's too old to be a serious threat to me."

Ali's eyes take on a dreamy quality. "I beat Weaver and win the title for the fourth time. Then say Holmes gets lucky and beats me. Then I come back and beat him and win the title for the fifth time. The five-time heavyweight champion. Tell me what ever happened in the world that was greater than that?"

"Well," says a friend, "this is Easter and..."

"I'm talking about sports," Ali said.

'HERCULES WAS A MYTH, BUT I'M NOT'

It would be nearly impossible to come by a more unlikely heavyweight champion. The WBA's latest, Michael Dwayne Weaver, 27, is an ex-Marine separated from the rest of the world by a thick drop cloth of shyness. His family and closest friends say he is boring, which he chooses not to dispute, and by his own assessment he isn't mean enough to be an outstanding fighter. "All my fights are the same," says Weaver. "If nobody hits me, then I'm going to hit nobody."

As a fighter he'd rather be an artist. His Los Angeles apartment is jammed with his pencil sketches and oil paintings, mostly portraits. He neither drinks nor smokes and would rather pray than cuss. His idea of a good time is seeing Rocky for the 17th time. Or going for a long drive alone in one of his three cars. Or taking his three daughters the is separated from his wife to Disneyland.

No one has ever disputed that Weaver has the skills to be a world champion. Born in Gatesville, Texas, he was two when his late father, Ordain, an auto mechanic, moved the family to Southern California. His mother, Janetta, says Mike never lacked for competition; he has eight brothers and four sisters. At Ganesha High in Pomona he ran the 100 in 9.8, long-jumped 25 feet and was an outstanding fullback. At 17 he was offered a football scholarship to Mount San Antonio College. But the Marine Corps made him an offer he couldn't refuse. "Two recruiters came to the school and showed some films," he says. "Then they told us they only took the toughest, and only a few of those. I always did like a challenge."

He enlisted in 1968 and volunteered for Vietnam. "At the time it seemed like the thing to do," he says. He saw combat but spared the subject with a shrug. It was after Vietnam, while based at Camp Lejeune, N.C., that he had a fight he will talk about.

It happened in an NCO club. Weaver and another Marine arrived at the jukebox simultaneously, and there was a dispute over who would hear his song first. "He threw a punch and missed. I threw a hook and knocked him out," Weaver says. "I found out he was the camp's heavyweight champion. The next day the boxing coach looked me up."

Leaving the corps in 1971, Weaver fought briefly as an amateur. In 1972 he turned pro. He was less than a sensation, losing three of his first four fights, twice by knockout. His problem was that he believed he could knock out anyone by the third round.



Late in the 10th round, Weaver battered Big Boy





John Tate, which sent the old champion to the canvas and the new one leaping high into the air



He blames only himself. "In the morning, if I ran at all, I'd go one block and quit," he says. "If a fight went more than three rounds I was in trouble."

Sometimes he worked as ex-heavyweight champion Ken Norton's sparring partner. It was Norton who, after one look at Weaver's bulging muscles, nicknamed him Hercules, a name Weaver has come to hate. "Hercules was a myth," he says. "I'm not."

Three times he quit the ring and three times Norton talked him into returning. "The only guy you can't beat is yourself," Norton told him. "The power and the potential of a world champion are there. You just won't train."

Weaver was sparring at the Hoover Street Gym in Los Angeles in 1976 when his manager, Don Manuel, first heard his name. "Some guy at the gym called me up and said I'd better get these gloves," Manuel says. "He said a guy named Mike Weaver had just knocked out my fighter, Bossman Jones. I said, 'Who's Mike Weaver?'"

Manuel decided he had better find out for himself since Bossman had never been knocked out. "I figured if this guy could do it in a gym, using those big gloves, he must have a whole lot of power," Manuel says. So Manuel made Weaver an offer, and he didn't refuse that one either.

Under Manuel's vigilant eye, Weaver won five bouts before losing to Stan Ward and Leroy Jones. After the Jones fight Manuel exploded. He stormed the dressing room, hit Weaver on the side of the head and cursed him. Then he turned and started to walk out. Weaver pleaded with him to come back.

There has been just one loss since, when Weaver went after Larry Holmes' WBC title and was stopped in the 12th round last June.

But last week he stunned John Tate with a series of blows in the 12th round. Nevertheless, Tate survived the round. In the 13th, to Manuel's horror, Weaver hardly threw a punch. The 14th was only a little better. By now, Tate was so far ahead on points that only a knockout could pull it out for Weaver.

As the bell for the 15th rang, Manuel's last orders were explicit, "Go out there and knock him out. If you don't, don't come back."

Since the beginning of the 14th round, the deeply religious Weaver had been reciting the Twenty-third Psalm. He is a member of the International Church of God in Christ. Two years ago his pastor, Mother L. C. Neale, gave him a Star of David, telling him it would bring him happiness and good fortune. He has worn it around his neck since, permitting no one to touch it. The Star of David was tucked aside as his left shoe as he fought Tate. With 55 seconds left in the bout he drilled a right hand to the body, followed with a paralyzing hook and added a grazing right as Tate fell.

As Weaver leaped into the air over the prone Tate, he thought, "My God, I'm Rocky."

KANSAS CITY LETS THE SUNS SHINE IN

The underdog Kings got one electrifying performance from Phil Ford in their opening-round playoff loss to fast-moving Phoenix, but what they really needed was hometown hero Tom Watson to hole out some shots **by BRUCE NEWMAN**

When Walter Davis puts the lights out, it stays dark. His Phoenix Suns were leading Kansas City 98-83 with 6:20 left in the third and deciding game of their first-round playoff series Sunday, but the Kings were showing signs of life for one of the few times that afternoon, in fact were threatening to put together a rally that could have cut short the Suns' run into the Western Conference semis. It was then that Davis, a forward, came hurtling downcourt on a fast break, which is how he always travels. Davis, it seems, never learned to walk, he went right from crawling to filling a lane. When he reached the foul line, he gathered in the ball and turned to find the Kings' Otis Birdsong waiting for him. Davis wheeled and pumped and sent Birdsong flying. Then he spun on his right foot and turned into the waiting arms of the Kings' Reggie King. Davis feinted, King nearly fainted, and the 6'6" Davis soared toward the rim for an eight-foot bank shot that increased the Phoenix lead to 17 points. Lights out, K.C. "You get them so that they don't know what you're going to do next," Davis said. "That's my game—hurt them in that moment of indecision."

Davis wound up hattering Kansas City to the tune of 22 points and seven assists in the 114-99 win that propelled the Suns into the semis against the Lakers. Davis' 57 points in the games with the Kings were four fewer than his equally gifted teammate, Paul Westphal, had during the series. But Davis prevented the Kings with an acute defensive headache every time he came near the ball. Although Kansas City's Scott Wedman did an admirable job of guarding Davis, the pressure took its toll on Wedman's offensive performance. He had only one good shooting game, and on Sunday, when K.C. was getting buried during the first three periods, he was 4-for-15 from the floor. Phoenix Assistant Coach Al Bianchi posed the question that even Wedman must have been asking him-

self by the time the series was over, "How is a thick-legged white kid going to stay with Davis?"

And it wasn't just Davis doing the damage. The Suns sped to the hoop from every direction, while Kansas City was forced to rely almost exclusively on the outside jumpers of its three stars, Birdsong, Wedman and Phil Ford. "We've got to shoot the ball well," said K.C. Coach Cotton Fitzsimmons before the rubber game. "If we don't, we're history." They didn't, and now they are.

The Kings hit only 42% of their shots Sunday, while Phoenix was canning 54%. Because Truck Robinson had strained ligaments in his left knee on Friday, disabling him for Sunday's game, Suns Coach John MacLeod was forced to start Jeff Cook in the finale. Cook, a 6'10" center-forward who played in the Western League in 1978-79, chipped in with 17 points (his regular-season average was 5.5), which was heartening considering that Robinson may miss part of the upcoming semis against L.A. MacLeod used backup Guard Mike Bratz, a 39% shooter for the season, almost interchangeably with starter Don Buse, and all Bratz did was knock in 17 of his 27 field-goal attempts. Perhaps as much as Davis, Bratz killed the Kings. In fact, the Phoenix bench was superior to Kansas City's in every department, including scoring, where it had a 41-20 series edge.

After Wednesday night's opener in Phoenix, an oddly dreary game that was more lopsided in the Suns' favor than the 96-93 score indicated, the winners tried to find nice things to say about the Kings. It wasn't easy.

Kansas City shot 25% from the field in the first period, failed to generate any kind of a running game and was behind by 17 points with just over four minutes remaining in the fourth quarter. Late in the game, with a touch of bravado, Kansas City Center Sam Lacey growled, "I'll see you Friday," in an un-

friendly sort of way to Phoenix Center Alvan Adams. Adams didn't hear what Lacey said and asked him to repeat it. Lacey did, but again Adams couldn't quite make it out. The third time around, Lacey spoke so slowly and enunciated in such a stilted way that when Adams finally got the message, even Lacey had to laugh at the empty seaboard he found himself rattling.

Phoenix came into the mini-series with a string of five consecutive victories over the Kings, and after the Suns had stretched that to six on Wednesday, Friday's second game, in K.C., promised to summarily end Kansas City's season. "The teams are so much alike it's as if we're looking in a mirror when we play them," said Westphal. "The only difference is that we're a little bit better—and they don't have Walter Davis."

Bianchi was so sure the Suns would finish off Kansas City that he sent his family ahead to Los Angeles so that the wife and kiddies could be with him on Easter Sunday, when the Suns would have opened their best-of-seven series with the Lakers. And Bianchi was evidently not the only one who underestimated the Kings. Friday's game drew only 9,637 customers to Kemper Arena, the smallest crowd of the season there. That seemed to prove what Fitzsimmons had said a day earlier: "We're the fourth franchise in Kansas City. The Royals are number one, then the Chiefs, and number three is Tom Watson when it isn't snowing. Then us." Watson is from Kansas City; he wasn't at the game Friday, either.

Fitzsimmons knew that if the Kings were to have any chance of defeating Phoenix, his team would have to open the floor up—get its offense rolling before the Suns had a chance to settle into their defense—for its primary shooters, Wedman and Birdsong. He assigned Ford the task of getting things going. Ford had shouldered much of the blame for Kansas City's dismal 4-1 loss to Phoenix



Westphal, here shooting over Wedman, was Phoenix leading scorer in the mini-series with 67 points

nix in the playoffs last year, and he hadn't performed well in the opener of this series. Fitzsimmons took Ford aside in the Kings' locker room Friday night and gently reminded him that he was the keystone of the Kings' offense. "I told him I didn't care if he scored a point," Fitzsimmons said later. "as long as he kept pushing the ball up the floor."

With Ford hustling from end to end for most of the first half, Birdsong hit five of his first seven shots and Wedman nine of 14 to put Kansas City ahead by as many as 23 points. By halftime, however, Phoenix had whittled that lead down to 14 points, and when Adams scored two of his 22 points on a running jumper in the lane late in the third period, the Suns went ahead 73-71.

On the next play, Ford, still not letting up, broke down the lane for a three-point play that put the Kings back in front 74-73. They would never relinquish that lead. Birdsong nailed his last five shots without a miss, and Wedman hit four of his last five. They finished with 30 and 32 points, respectively.

Despite the setback, the Suns remained confident. "They have to go to Birdsong and Wedman when it's close," said Westphal, "so it's pretty easy to defend against them at the end of the game. Our team goes to Walter and me a lot, but we've got some other guys who we can give the ball to."

"There aren't too many teams who win by getting all their points from the outside," said Davis. "You've got to be able to go inside sometimes."

The Kings weren't able to do that Sunday, partly because the Suns played their best defense of the series, partly because Lacey banged up his left knee during the first two minutes of the game and was ineffective thereafter. On the offensive end, that meant the Kings had to let loose from outside, and what they were throwing up were mostly rocks. On the defensive end, it meant that K.C. had no one to get in Adams' way. He quietly went crazy, getting 20 rebounds and 19 points. Fitzsimmons nonetheless left Lacey in for 37 minutes. "He's the best I've got, lumping or not," Cotton said.

Meanwhile, the best the Suns have got, Davis, just kept running, until he had turned back the Kings' last threat, until he had turned out the lights on K.C. **END**



GOODBY TO ALL THAT

After 11 seasons of hard, unsurpassed play, and a whole lot of hard knocks, Roger Staubach retires from a team in transition **by PAUL ZIMMERMAN**

So long, Roger, we gave you a bum deal, kid. For openers, we never picked you All-Pro. That's we, the writers, the pickers, the guys who vote on the AP and Pro Football Writers ballots. Now that's a bad call right away, because all you did was end up as the NFL's top-rated passer—in history, the whole 59 years. Higher than Unitas, than Tarkenton or Jurgensen, than Tittle or Baugh. And you quarterbacked the Cowboys in four of their five Super Bowls, winning twice. And brought the team from behind to victory 14 times in the last two minutes or in overtime, 23 times in the

fourth quarter. Hey, what does a guy have to do?

Oh, you made the all-division team a few times. But never the big one, the starting 11, AFC and NFC combined. "You look back on it and it seems amazing, doesn't it?" says one selector. "But it just worked out that when he had his greatest years, someone had a slightly better one. And then you felt that Roger would always be around, and he'd be great for the next 10 years or so, and his time would come. So you went with the hot hand . . . and Staubach got stiffed."

And now he's gone. Staubach made it

official last week at a press conference in the Texas Stadium Club room. There were 200 witnesses, some from as far away as New Jersey, 42 of them with microphones. With the metronomic click-click-click of the cameras in the background, Staubach spoke for 18 minutes.

He wore an open-neck shirt and a dark blue sweater. He looked a very youthful 38. A few gray hairs, a few lines in the face, but not the image of the old pro saying farewell. He looked youthful until you saw film clips of him in his rookie year of '69. Flat-top haircut, baby face—a



child, really. And the guy was 27 with a year of Vietnam behind him.

The book on Staubach was always that his four years of naval service didn't count when you figured his NFL age, that being in Nam doesn't age you as quickly as ducking forearms. It's an argument that probably would have been projected into his 50th year. "He's not really a 50-year-old quarterback, you see, his actual NFL age is only 46."

But last week Staubach put an end to it, joining a very small fraternity of NFL stars who quit when they could still com-

mand a big salary—Jimmy Brown, Fran Tarkenton, Whizzer White if you want to go way back. His announcement overshadowed two other major Cowboy retirements, each of which could have commanded a major press conference of its own. Offensive Tackle Rayfield Wright, 34, and Free Safety Cliff Harris, 31, with nine years of combined All-Pro behind them, each called it a career. With Wright it was a forced decision. Tom Landry decided that 13 seasons was enough. But Harris, the definitive safetyman of the '70s and an almost certain Hall of Famer, caught the Cowboys by surprise when he told them he had a good opportunity with a young and energetic oil company, and there comes a time in every man's life.

Gone, too, is Hollywood Henderson, the strongside linebacker. No, his reinstatement is not being considered, nor will it be. That holds true whatever happens to his replacement, Mike Hegman, who is facing possible prosecution on a charge of theft for allegedly forging a friend's name on \$10,534 worth of checks.

So all of a sudden there are holes all over the Cowboys' depth chart as well as in the roof of their stadium. It is hoped that Too Tall Jones will return from his one-year boxing career. Underline hope: so far he hasn't said anything about it. Charlie Waters, the All-Pro strong safety, is coming back from major knee surgery. And the Cowboys won't be drafting until the third round, Nos. 1 and 2 having gone to the Colts for Defensive End John Dutton.

So last week Landry, who hasn't experienced such a severe case of the shorts since the early expansion years in Dallas, watched his quarterback say goodbye, and he was wondering where he'd find another one like him.

"He hadn't indicated anything during the season," he said later. "He'd had such a good year, one of his best ever. But things weren't encouraging during the off-season. Right after the playoffs, he told me he was considering the possibility of retiring. He said he wanted to

tell me early, so I could get ready for it."

Staubach might have decided already. After the 21-19 loss to the Rams in the playoffs, he was driving home with his wife, Marianne, and he told her he'd had it. "That's it," he said. "Can you believe that the last pass I completed in the NFL was to Herbert Scott?"

Every official in Texas Stadium reached for his flag on that play. Guards aren't eligible receivers in the NFL. Staubach had been trying to throw the ball away, throw it into the ground, but he'd gotten too much on it, and it hit Scott in the belly and he reflexively grabbed it. Staubach had been zapped earlier in the game when Jack Reynolds bounced his head off the Tarian Turf, giving Roger his fifth concussion of the season.

He was tired and his head hurt and his team had just been eliminated from the playoffs. December talk, his wife figured. She'd heard it before. But Lord knows, it wouldn't be such a bad idea. Five concussions, two of them serious. He'd experienced some numbness after the Pittsburgh game.

continued



The scene was happening too often. Staubach is hit hard, leaves the field woozy and remains on the bench, suffering another concussion.





This is "quality" time with 5-year-old Jeffrey

Twenty concussions, total, including high school. A few weeks after the Rams game, a New York neurologist told Staubach that, yes, there was some cumulative damage, a slight slowing of some of the reflexes.

He had paid his dues. His left shoulder was dislocated 17 times before he underwent surgery to have the ligaments tightened. When Staubach tries to move his left arm backward, the motion is markedly limited. The little finger on his throwing hand doesn't look like a finger at all. It's a perfect Z, discounting a big round knot in the middle. The index finger is swollen and off-line.

"I was hoping he meant it that day in the car, that he'd really retire," his wife says. "If he'd have played again this year and he'd have been knocked out again, my heart would have stopped. But I wasn't going to tell him that. The decision had to be his. Usually I could see his enthusiasm coming back in the off-season. This year I didn't."

The idea of his retiring had taken hold, although in Dallas Staubach had become an institution. His secretary, Roz Cole, was sending out 10,000 pictures a season. He would write a personal message on 300 a week, he'd answer 3,000 letters a year. His life had become an inspira-

tion to the country, but it had its price. He'd get requests for 70 to 80 speaking engagements a week. Church groups, prisons, hospitals. It's not in Staubach's nature to stiff anybody. You've never heard any stories about him brushing off a kid with an autograph book. Sonny Jurgensen used to duck out on the writers, through a back door, after his games; Joe Namath had one set of writers he'd talk to and another he wouldn't, but no journalist ever said Staubach had given him a hard time.

What could he do? He had a life to live. He has five children at home. "They need quality time from me," he concluded. "Not just time, but quality time. I'd be watching films and my daughter would come in to tell me about something that happened in school, and I'd say, 'Not now, can't you see I'm busy?' and she'd go away. And then an hour later I'd think, 'What the heck have I done?' and I'd go and find her up in her bedroom and try to tell her how sorry I was."

He added up the pluses and minuses of life in the NFL. And outside: he is president of a real-estate company, Holloway-Staubach, that is branching out. In that league he was known as a "young executive." The decision became clear to Staubach. It was time.

continued



The hat may be funny; the challenge is not



Helm would rather let oil than receivers



Hollywood gets calls, but not from Dallas



KENTS
DON'T
HAVE
IT!



MERITS
DON'T
HAVE
IT!



MARLBORO
LIGHTS
DON'T
HAVE IT!



WINSTON
LIGHTS
DON'T
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WE'VE HAD ONE BUILT FOR YOU.

A press conference was announced. The next day Gil Brandt, the Cowboys' Vice-President for Personnel Development, was stopped by a patrolman for making an improper turn on the North Central Expressway in Dallas. He had left his wallet and driver's license in the office.

"I'll tell you what," the cop said. "You tell me what Roger's gonna do and I'll let you go."

"Buddy, I just wish I knew," Brandt said. The cop let him go anyway.

On Monday morning Staubach drove to the practice field to say goodbye to his teammates. He wanted to keep it light.

"I felt it was only fitting that Herb Scott caught my last pass," he said. "He's worked hard during his career, and he never got to catch one. And he did such a good job getting open on the play."

It was nice and loose—for a while. One more oversight in Staubach's career is that he never got the recognition he deserved as a comic. He's got a genuine zany streak, and he should have been born looking like Woody Allen, but when you're president of the student body in high school and prom king and a star in three sports—well, those credentials don't break 'em up.

A few days before the press conference the Cowboys' receptionist got a call from a cactus-voiced fan who told her, "If Roger's leaving, you can just cancel my season tickets right now." She hung up. Then came another call, nastier than the first. Then another. Then Staubach called. "I want to find out how many fans have canceled their season tickets," he said.

"Dammit, Roger," she said. "They were all you!"

When it came time for Staubach to thank his teammates for the 11 years, things got a little heavy. You don't just shabby-potter out of a career. But the toughest time came in the press conference when Staubach had to speak of Landry. "Of course the nuts and bolts of the Dallas Cowboys," he said, and there was a pause of 10 seconds or so while he got himself together. "Was the man who wears the funny hat on the sidelines."

"I don't know why, but I just couldn't say his name," Staubach said later. "I didn't want to get too emotional, but when I came to his name—well, I knew if I said it I'd probably lose control."

The press conference over, Staubach drove home with Marianne Dunny White and Glenn Carano, who will line up for the quarterback job next season, dropped by, along with Middle Linebacker Bob Breung, and they played some two-on-two half-court basketball in the backyard. Staubach and White took two of three games.

When sundown came, Staubach and his family went to a friend's house for a first night of Passover seder. "I wore a yarmulke," he said. "The kids got a tremendous kick out of the hiding of the matzo and then ransoming it; the food was terrific. It was a good way to end a very tough day."

For the Cowboys the tough days are only beginning. Landry will spend more time coaching the defense this season, and former Cowboy Halfback Danny Reeves will have more responsibility for the offense. It's not hard to figure out why Landry is so interested in his defense: The Cowboys gave up 313 points last year, the most since 1963, when Don Meredith and Eddie LeBaron were battling to quarterback a 4-10 team. The rushing defense was 11th in the league, and the Cowboys had the fewest interceptions (13) in the NFL. Staubach pulled out four games in the last two minutes. "He was the difference between a good year and an average year," Landry says. And now there's no Staubach to carry the Cowboys anymore.

Everyone says White has the potential to produce points, but what about the defense? "It's the kind of challenge that Landry handles best," Harris says. "Somehow I get the feeling he'll find exactly the right pieces to fit into the puzzle. I think his genius will really come out next season."

Landry still isn't convinced Harris will stay retired. "He's impulsive," the coach says. "He does things the way he plays. He gives so much, just like Roger, that he needs the spark, and if he doesn't think it's there ... well, then he just doesn't feel he can give what's needed. I think he might get the spark back."

Harris likes to talk about the oil firm he works for, U.S. Companies Inc., which acquires property, makes tests, then drills. He gets excited when he tells you about the chances of hitting a big one. Staubach has already become an inves-

tor in U.S. Companies. Harris doesn't sound as if he really wants to drill receivers anymore.

"Listen to this," he says. "One of the guys who called me when I retired was Lynn Swann. Can you imagine? Swann, of all people. Such a bitter rival, for so long. He said, 'I don't mind your leaving. I'll extend my career.'"

Harris was one of four players, along with Staubach, Breung, and Tony Dorsett, who came up with \$2,000 apiece to help Hegman cover those checks. Hegman himself covered the rest, and the bank, Republic National of Dallas, is supposedly satisfied, but the Dallas DA's office has not yet decided what to do about the case.

Henderson is gone. "Landry has had it up to here with him, and so have a lot of us," one player says. "The guy would always pick defensive day to come up with a sore back or something. When he pulled that sideline stunt in the Washington game [Henderson was fooling with a bandanna for a TV camera] it was the last straw. We were getting blown out, and he wasn't making any tackles—that's the wrong time to clown."

"The offers we've had on a trade for him are embarrassing," says Brandt. "Nothing as high as a first- or second-round draft, which we need. I don't know. Butch Johnson [a backup wide receiver] keeps talking about wanting to be traded. Maybe we can put together a package with him and Thomas."

Pat Thomas, L.A.'s left cornerback, is mad at the Rams and wants to play for Dallas. He's visited the Cowboys' office, which is only a short trip from his home in Plano. But not many people seriously expect the Rams to trade their best defensive back to a traditional playoff rival.

Then there's talk about Patriot Cornerback Mike Haynes, who has played out his option and wouldn't mind wearing silver and blue. But if the Cowboys pick him up, it would cost them two years' worth of first-round picks, based on Haynes' salary, which would mean going in hock until 1982. It's a risky way to travel, and it's never been their style.

The reality is that Staubach is gone and so is Harris, and the defense shows patches. For the first time in years, the Cowboys are going into a season shorthanded. Landry has been there before. He didn't lose all that hair for nothing. **END**

'IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO WIN'

So thought Ed Sneed. He led the '79 Masters by three strokes with three holes left. Then the nightmare began

by MYRA GELBAND

More than in any other golf championship, the competitive tensions of a Masters tournament are heightened by the rich tapestry of its backdrop. Visually and psychologically, the Augusta National course can be hypnotic and distracting. The landscape draws the eye to bright flashes of dogwood and azalea and redbud and then upward along the slender, swaying trunks of tall, gracefully crowned Georgia pines that frame the lush fairways, creating what seems a single, lightly traveled pathway. It is a theater of golf. Indeed, many a player has felt like tiptoeing to a green so as not to disturb the setting. Here Gene Sarazen double-eagled the 15th in 1935; here Byron Nelson defeated Ben Hogan in an epic struggle in 1942; here Arnold Palmer, Gary Player and Jack Nicklaus prevailed so often. That sense of spirals re-creating, every Masters offers this, yet each year has an individual stamp. This week's renewal will surely have its own theme. But what one remembers will not necessarily be the winner. The agony of a near-winner can be what endures.

The 1979 Masters will be remembered as the one that Ed Sneed failed to win, for the memory of his losing struggle on the final three holes is more poignant and wrenching than the sudden burst of sub-par golf that Fuzzy Zoeller, ultimately the winner, played to come into contention.

Sneed was tied for the lead after two rounds; after three rounds he had put five strokes between himself and the field. And with only three holes remaining, he held a three-stroke lead over Tom Watson, four over Zoeller. Not until the final hole of regulation play did he relinquish the last bit of his advantage. A bogey on the 18th hole, his third in succession, dropped him into a deadlock with Watson and Zoeller, and the tie was broken by the first sudden-death playoff in the 43-year history of the Masters.

All things considered, Zoeller's victory was almost serendipitous. It was his first appearance in the Masters and he had hoped only to play well. "Any time I finish second I feel like I've won," Zoeller had once remarked. In winning at Augusta, he did not have to hit a single shot while in the lead. For Sneed, who had never before challenged for a major championship, the disappointment of losing was compounded by the leader's burden he had shouldered for two days, and the deep feeling he speaks of having for the Masters:

"There is no tournament I would rather win than the Masters. A British Open

at St. Andrews or a U.S. Open at Merion or Pebble Beach might come close, but Augusta is the most special place in golf for me.

"After winning the 1973 Kaiser Open I was sent an invitation to play in the 1974 Masters. Bobby Jones died in 1971 and I have regretted that I never competed in the Masters while he was alive. He may have been the greatest champion in golf, and I would have treasured meeting him.

"Since I had never seen, much less played, Augusta National, I decided to practice there a couple of times before playing in the Greensboro Open the week before the Masters. I arrived late on Sunday afternoon and, after introducing myself and inquiring if I could take a look at the course, I walked out on the veranda toward the 9th and 18th greens. Standing there for about 15 minutes, I was mesmerized by the beauty, imagining I could hear the roars of the Augusta galleries.

"I suddenly realized it was getting dark, but I wanted to see the holes in the lower part of the course, in Amen Corner. I started running down the 18th fairway at full stride. None of our Olympic 800-meter runners need worry, but it's about half a mile to the 11th green and that evening it took me only about two minutes to get there. Passing the 18th tee I saw two members walking off the 17th green and I wondered if they would report me to Security. After all, this wasn't a 12-year-old kid but a 29-year-old man sprinting across staid Augusta National.

"I crossed Rae's Creek to the 12th green, and walked up 13, then cut over to 15 and 16. There was electricity in the air, but I wasn't prepared for the flood of emotion that welled up. No television picture or storybook can convey the spirit of Augusta. Each time I play that part of the course I am reminded of that evening walk when I saw it for the first time.

"By the time I got to 16 it was almost

comatose

On the 18th green, the putt that should have won the Masters for Sneed hung tantalizingly on the lip



dark and I began walking back toward the clubhouse. I could see lights on in the dining room and in one of the cottages behind the 10th tee. There was no one outside, and as I walked by the 18th green I felt a little lonely."

Sneed finished 43rd in his first Masters, in 1974, and in two subsequent appearances missed the 36-hole cut and tied for 18th, although he always felt that his game and his attitude were better suited to Augusta than was reflected in those performances.

Sneed is a stylish golfer, with an elegant, supple swing. It has puzzled many people, including himself, that he has won only three tour events in his 10-year career. A consistent player, floating between 25th and 50th on the money list, Sneed has measurably improved his game in the last few years under the watchful eye of teaching pro George Fazio. Among his peers he is known for his engaging wit and playful sense of humor. He is one of only a handful of PGA players who do not list fishing as a "special interest" in the tour press guide, preferring instead the more cerebral challenges of bridge, chess, backgammon and billiards. To the public, he is a handsome figure—boyish, sandy-haired and, at 6'2" and 190 pounds, athletic-looking. He is often taken to be a relative of Sam Snead. Last fall, during a tournament in Japan, he was waiting to start a round when a commentator stepped onto the tee to conduct an interview for the gallery. "So," the man began, "in America you are known as Ed." The man put the microphone in front of Sneed.

"I wasn't sure what he meant," Sneed says. "The Japanese must think Ed is a nickname and not my real name. I told him that although my name is Sneed, I'm not related to Sam Snead, that our names are spelled differently."

The interviewer tried another question. "So, in Japan we watch your popular television program, Mr. Ed."

Sneed was momentarily nonplussed, but quickly replied, "I'm not related to him, either."

As he approached the 1979 Masters, Sneed's game started to come together in that mysterious process golfers refer to as getting "in the groove." Some intangible factor is suddenly present and the golfer is in total control, fully confident of each shot. At the Sea Pines Heritage Classic, two weeks before Augusta, Sneed had rounds of 69-69-71-66—275



In the first three rounds Sneed let the ball with confidence, and was slated at the results

on the tight and demanding Harbour Town Golf Links, and finished second, five shots behind Watson. But he beat the third finisher by four strokes. (The previous week, in the Tournament Players Championship at Sawgrass, Sneed had shot 76-76 and missed the cut, keeping intact his streak of never having played the final rounds of the TPC.)

He took off the week of the Greensboro tournament to relax and practice at Augusta. Early in the week he played with Ken Venturi, the 1964 U.S. Open champion, who now does commentary for CBS golf telecasts. As an amateur in 1956, Venturi had almost won the Masters, leading for three days, then shooting a last-round 80 to finish second by a stroke to Jackie Burke. Sneed reflects:

"It was a different me that came to Augusta in 1979. After playing what I considered to be one of my best tournaments ever at the Heritage, I felt prepared and ready to win. In practice I seemed able to play any shot with ease—left-to-right, right-to-left, low fades, high, soft, knockdown. Every shot I hit seemed to be within a controlled pattern. Each day my confidence rose.

Never had my preparation for a single golf tournament been so complete or my confidence so high.

"Venturi and I played together on Sunday and afterward, on the practice tee, he told me, 'Ed, I really think you can win this. I've just got a feeling it's your week.'"

"It was exciting to have someone see what I was feeling and, despite the anticipation of winning a major championship, I was more relaxed than ever before a competitive event. I felt a very quiet confidence, something the great players must feel when they're at the top of their games. I simply knew that I was going to win."

Thursday was warm and muggy, but alive with the kind of expectation that pervades the first round of the Masters. Paired with England's Peter Oosterhuis, Sneed teed off at 12:30 p.m. That day he shot a 68, putting him in a group with Watson, Joe Inman and Leonard Thompson, one stroke back of Bruce Lietzke.

"I began with an unspectacular but solid round. I never sank a long putt, my longest being eight feet at the 9th hole for par. But I didn't miss my short



ones, and only needed 30 putts for the day. I was extremely happy with my start.

"The second day produced my best round ever in a major tournament, and maybe one of the three or four best I have ever played. I shot 67, even though I missed no fewer than 10 putts inside of 12 feet. In fact, I putted very well, but the putts just seemed to rim out and slip by the hole. The highlight of the round had to be the 45-footer I holed at 17 for birdie, coming after birdies at 13, 15 and 16. I was elated.

"Early in the round I remember seeing my name at the bottom of the leader board at the 6th hole, and I told my caddy, Bill Jackson, 'They're going to have to move my name up.'"

Sneed had played 36 holes without a bogey and without a hot putter. His playing companion the second morning was Zoeller, who marveled afterward. "I've never seen anything like it. Ed hit right at the flag all day." Zoeller shot a 71, which left him six strokes off Sneed's 135 total.

Friday had been dark and ominous

from the beginning, and at 1:45, while Sneed was still being interviewed by reporters, it began to rain violently. A tornado alert was posted on the course and play was temporarily suspended. Sneed retreated to the men's grill upstairs in the clubhouse. He ate lunch, watching the streams of water that threatened to wash out the round and, with it, his good score. After a two-hour delay, play resumed with all but six groups able to finish before dark, and the round became official. Through the long wait Sneed had been relaxed.

"I was concerned but not panicked. Rounds get washed out sometimes—simple as that—though you hate to lose a 67 or any good score. If I'd been scrambling and playing all over creation I'd have been more worried. But I had played very well. I was never in trouble. I just felt I could go out and shoot another good score if I had to."

On Saturday the sky was clear. The sun bathed Augusta National and for Sneed it was a day filled with promise. He began it tied for the lead with Craig Stadler at nine under par, and steadily he put distance between himself and the field, shooting a 69 that moved him to 12 under par, five strokes ahead of Stadler and Watson, six ahead of Zoeller and Laetke.

"My third round was much like the second, with the exception of my first and only bogey of the first three rounds, at the 5th hole, a long par 4. After a perfect drive I was a bit aggressive with my second shot. I hit a six-iron right at the hole, which was in a difficult position on the left side of the green. The ball hit strong and spun left, trickling down a slope just to the left of the hole. I chipped to within four feet and missed the putt.

"The best shot of the day came at the 18th. Using a driver, I played a fade that didn't move quite enough to the right, catching the edge of the first of the two fairway bunkers. The ball wasn't in a bad lie, but I couldn't get it high in the air without taking the risk of hitting behind it. With about 175 yards to the hole I took a four-iron, playing a slight draw, and it came up perfectly, stopping 12 feet right of the cup. I missed the putt, but after my position in the bunker, a par was what I wanted.

"I can't argue with those who maintain that the leader has to bear the great-

continued

On Sunday, as his all-but-insurmountable lead vanished, he became defensive and rantative.





The end came on the second playoff hole. Zweller leaped into the air after sinking a birdie putt. Al Watson (back to camera) and Sneed could do was watch.

SNEED'S MASTERS continued

est pressure, but that is not the way it was for me that week. I continued to feel that flow of confidence, relaxed in mind and body. In other tournaments I have felt that pressure, but not once at Augusta did I feel I might buckle. My game was too solid."

Sneed's confidence and control were evident to other players as well. Watson was asked to assess his chances of challenging from a five-stroke deficit. "There's no reason why a player of Sneed's caliber shouldn't win," Watson said. "He's swinging well and has confidence. The only way I can win is for Ed to play poorly and me to play well."

Stadler agreed, saying, "Ed isn't making any mistakes and that's the key."

Before leaving the course on Saturday afternoon, Sneed spent some time at the putting green. "I don't think I'll be too conservative tomorrow," he said at the time. "At the beginning of the round I'll do just what I've been doing all week. If I have a big lead on the back nine, I wouldn't want to do anything fool-

ish on the water holes. If my lead was only two or three strokes, I'd have to be more aggressive."

And with that he went home to the house that he and his wife, Nancy, had rented for the week, there to enjoy the antics of his daughters, Elisa, 4, and Erica, 2, and a steak dinner with friends from Charlotte, N.C.

Around 9 that evening Sneed called the club to find out his tee time and putting. He had hoped it would be Watson, because if anyone were to press him he thought it would be Tom. Watson is an aggressive and formidable opponent head-on, witness his performance in the British Open at Turnberry in 1977 when, paired with Nicklaus the last two rounds,

As the Masters comes up again, the Sneeds relax on a Florida beach. Ed, Nancy, Elisa, 5, and Erica, 3.



he fell as many as three strokes away only to attack his way to level with three holes remaining, and finally to a one-stroke victory. Sneed was surprised, then, and a little disappointed to learn that he was paired with Stadler. Watson and Zoeller would play together, just ahead. Still, he slept well.

Sneed's in-laws, Nick and Betty Popa, had helped Elsa and Erica decorate Easter eggs on Saturday, and on Sunday morning, after attending Easter Mass, the family returned home for a spirited egg hunt. The time passed quickly. At 11, Sneed went to the club, where he joined a friend for breakfast in the men's grill. At 2 o'clock, he and Stadler teed off in the last pair of the day.

"The weather on Sunday was different. It was very windy, gusting up to 35 or 40 mph, but I wasn't worried. I've never had much of a problem keeping the ball down low in the wind. Such unpredictable gusting reduced the chances of someone out of the pack shooting a 65 or 66 to catch me, as happened the year before when Gary Player shot 64.

"I started with a tough par at the 1st hole, blasting out of the trap to three feet and holing the putt. At the 2nd, after knocking a two-iron on the green, I three-putted from 60 feet for a par, and lost a chance to maintain my five-shot lead. Watson birdied the 2nd and then the 3rd, and when I bogeyed the 4th I knew that my lead was only two shots.

"At 6, a par-3 where the tee is elevated, the wind made club selection tricky. I hit what I thought was a good six-iron but the ball came up short in the bunker. After playing my next stroke, I was still in the bunker. At that point, I had to step away and get a firmer grip on things. I blasted to four feet and saved a bogey. That settled me down."

Sneed gathered his wits enough to par the next three holes, missing birdie putts at the 8th and 9th. But it had been a shaky start, and his game was not as relaxed and fluid as it had been earlier in the week. He turned in 38, two over par on the day, 10 under for the tournament. Stadler had fallen away with bogeys at the 7th and 9th. Watson had parred into the turn at eight under, and Zoeller had birdied 8, his first subpar hole of the round, to move to six under.

A poor approach shot of the 10th

green set up Sneed's third bogey of the round, and now one had to think back to his remarks of the previous day, when he spoke of having to become more aggressive if his lead dwindled on the back side. Watson and Zoeller had parred 10, and Sneed led by only a stroke. Looking a bit shaky, he made sure of his par at the 11th, playing a three-iron to the safety of the back center of the green and getting down in two. He now faced the deceptive and unforgiving par-3 12th.

"My next stroke could have revealed in total disaster. Even when the rest of the golf course is still, the wind in that low corner can be gusting. Players have hit one shot into the water and a moment later flown over the green with the same club. I didn't know it at the time, but most players had been hitting eight-irons to the green and seven-irons over it. Having just played the 11th against the wind, I thought it might still be blowing at the 12th, as the holes run approximately in the same direction. The pin was tucked near the front right, flirting with the water. With about 160 yards to the center of the green, I chose a six-iron and aimed almost everything. The ball ended up on the downslope of the back bunker, and I had to blast back toward the water. I had to carry the ball onto the fringe and hope I could get enough backspin to keep it on the green and not have it roll across into Rac's Creek. This had to be my best shot of the tournament. It landed perfectly in the fringe, then moved toward the pin, finishing three inches left of the hole. It gave me my biggest lift and couldn't have come at a more opportune moment."

That extraordinary shot from the bunker seemed to buoy Sneed, to steady him and offset some of the vise-grip pressure he was feeling. His pursuers now included Jack Nicklaus, suddenly eight under through 16. Up ahead, Watson was paring the par-5 13th after an errant tee shot, and Zoeller had to be content with a birdie after reaching the green in two. Sneed laid up at 13, pitching to five feet with his third shot, and holed the putt for a birdie 4. He was pulling away again, now with a two-stroke lead, and things seemed to be going his way.

Watson bogeyed the 14th after hitting a poor approach. Sneed drove to the right on 14, and though his second shot came nicely out of the trees, his position on the front fringe was similar to Watson's

moments earlier. But unlike Watson, Sneed got it up and down safely to stay at 10 under, now three ahead.

Both Zoeller and Watson birdied 15. Sneed followed with one of his own, a Hogan-style birdie featuring a wonderful pitch shot over the water that stopped eight feet from the flag.

By this time Nicklaus had bogeyed 17 and would finish at seven under, 281. After 16, Zoeller was seven under and Watson eight under.

"I went to the 16th hole thinking it was impossible for anything to happen except for me to win. I had played brilliantly for three rounds, fought through the most dangerous part of the golf course on a day when I was playing poorly and emerged with a three-stroke lead and only three holes to play."

"As I walked to the tee, the gallery was standing and applauding, not in a wild frenzy but appreciatively. It was quite moving and exhilarating."

"I have refused to second-guess my strategy on the next three holes. There's no question I played conservatively, but I cannot imagine anyone in that position trying to put the ball in any other spots."

"At 16, I hit my tee shot almost exactly where I wanted. I was a bit surprised that the ball didn't spin more to the left when it hit the green. If it had, it would have run down the slope toward the hole, maybe 12 or 15 feet away. Instead it bounced up onto the knb and stopped, leaving a long, difficult putt. I played a 10-foot break on my first putt, and hit it five feet past the hole. My second putt was solid but it went over the left lip and I had a bogey 4. All in all, a four there did not seem disastrous. I went to 17 knowing I still held the lead I didn't feel tight."

Watson missed a 10-foot birdie putt on 17 that again would have brought him within a shot of Sneed, and he would par in to finish at eight under, 280. Zoeller, who had crept into contention with birdies at 13 and 15, birdied 17 from 14 feet and now marched happily up 18 tied with Watson. Sneed goes on.

"My tee shot at 17 was perfect, downwind 290 yards in the center of the fairway, but my second shot remains a mystery to me. I knew I had 104 yards to clear the bunker in front of the green. The pin was in the back, so I figured 120 yards to the hole. Just as I prepared to hit, the wind gustied

continued

very hard, from the left and behind me. I attempted a high soft shot and when the ball left the club I couldn't have been more pleased. It started on line, faded slightly toward the hole and looked close. While it was still in the air, a gust of wind actually knocked the ball down and slightly left. But the green, hard and fast, didn't hold the shot and the ball slid over the ridge onto the back fringe. My first putt was excellent, coming up over the rise and slipping no more than three feet past the hole. I thought my second putt would break left, not enough to give away the hole, but I must have pushed it slightly, because it went over the right edge of the cup. Another bogey."

From the comforting cushion of three strokes, Sneed had dissipated his lead. Having to make par on the final hole to win is a world removed from even a two-stroke edge, and needing that par on the heels of two damaging bogeys added to the pressure of the task. There was no question that Sneed was playing tentatively.

"As I prepared to hit my tee shot at 18, a three-wood to be short of the bunkers, a young kid snapped his camera and I was forced to step away. I took my time, then drove perfectly into the left center of the fairway. That gave me a big lift. I had been terribly distracted when I was ready to play, but had collected myself.

"A four would win. I had 160 yards to the hole, a solid seven-iron, and I wanted the ball on the right side of the green, either pin-high or below the cup. This was the poorest shot I hit on the closing stretch. My body came up a bit quickly at impact and I hit it slightly to the right. Instead of a draw, the ball flew dead straight and took a huge bounce to the right, coming to rest on the edge of the right bunker.

"I called Joe Black, a tournament official, over to look at my ball. It appeared to be half in and half out of the bunker, and a cigarette butt lay in the sand almost touching it. I wanted to remove the butt with an official watching in case the ball moved and I had to replace it. Also, I wanted to know if he thought the ball was in or out of the bunker. Black determined it was out of the bunker, but even then I was afraid to ground my club, for fear of moving the ball. This only added to the difficulty of the pitch shot

"I hit what I thought was a pretty decent shot. The ball came up about six feet below the hole."

Perhaps he had let up on the last holes, after struggling through the treacherous stretch of Amen Corner. Perhaps he had loosened his grip before he had the tournament fully in his grasp. Perhaps he was thinking about winning when there still was too much golf course to be played. Whatever had gone wrong, the results could be read on Sneed's face. Serenity had faded. He had just hit a marvelous shot under the most testing of circumstances, yet there was no relief in his expression, only tautness and apprehension at the six-foot putt that remained.

"I read a break to the right and decided to play the ball at the left center of the hole. I don't know if I pulled it, or if it jumped slightly left on the way. All I know is that I thought the ball was going in, and it hung there, incredibly, on the left lip with a quarter of the ball over the hole."

A gasp escaped the gallery. Sneed beat over and studied the ball, which was perched precariously, overhanging the hole. But it was not to fall. Finally he tapped in for his bogey, a last-round 76 and the same eight-under-par total as Watson and Zoeller, who had finished in time to watch Sneed falter.

After he had checked over and signed his scorecard, Sneed was asked by Black if he wanted a few minutes to compose himself. He declined. The playoff was to begin immediately on the adjacent 10th hole, a demanding 485-yard par-4 with its green raised above the valley of the fairway and shaded almost entirely by tall pines. Sneed won the coin toss and hit first. Watson next and Zoeller last. All hit good drives and all three put their second shots within 12 feet of the flag.

"Fuzzy's putt missed, and I could redeem myself with my 10-footer. My caddy told me it would break slightly right. I thought it would go straight or slightly left, and although I had consulted him on a good number of putts that week and had confidence in him, I just couldn't make myself play the ball out of the hole as Bill suggested. I patted for the left corner of the cup and the ball slid by on the right.

"Watson missed. I was still alive.

"We all hit good drives at 11, Fuzzy's

being much longer than Tom's or mine. I had to play over the corner of the pond from about 185 yards, downhill with a wind blowing slightly in my face. Because of the wind I chose a five-iron instead of a six. The scouting report says always play to the right side of the green to avoid the water. But in a three-way playoff you have to throw away that chapter. I thought I hit it stiff, but it was long and I was bunkered.

"Tom and Fuzzy hit great shots, but their putts were by no means automatic and I thought if I could save par we could go play No. 12 again.

"Some people think I tried to hole that bunker shot, because it almost went in. Under any circumstances it was a remarkable shot, but I was only trying to get close enough to make four, and it stopped 15 inches from the hole.

"Tom's putt was on fire but a bit short. Then Fuzzy putted, and for a moment as I watched the ball roll into the cup, I couldn't believe it had happened. It was like having the wind knocked out of me. The tension was suddenly gone.

"The shadows were long as I rode in the cart back toward the clubhouse. It was very cold.

"I was bewildered, not bitter or full of self-pity. I knew in my heart I had outplayed and outsmarted the field, but I didn't feel very smart at 6 o'clock that Sunday afternoon.

"Yet I realized quickly that how I accepted that defeat was very important. Many times that sort of thing has happened to players and they never recovered. I knew that I couldn't let that happen. Finishing second is an accomplishment, too.

"After the interviews and the presentation ceremony, Nancy and I went home and as we pulled in the driveway, Elisa and Erica came running out of the house. They had watched the tournament on TV with their grandmother. 'Daddy, Daddy,' Elisa shouted as she hugged my legs. 'Congratulations. You won.' I turned to my wife and said, 'I guess I am the winner.'

"Later that Sunday night I went back to the course to retrieve a bag cover. It was quiet and I went out to the 18th green and stood for a few minutes near the cup. As I walked back to the clubhouse, I saw lights on in the dining room, and, only for a moment, I felt a little bit lonely."



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McKAY HAS A NEW RACQUET

Heather McKay, unbeaten in squash since 1962, has switched to racquetball, barely missing a stroke

by JIM KAPLAN

Once a notable field hockey and tennis player in her native Australia, McKay displays her array of weapons in her home club in Toronto, where she is the pro.

Call her Wendy Trendy. She's the archetypal racquetball player: affable, outgoing, *au courant*. No shrinking violet, she knows where she's going and how to get there. She exudes confidence. But when asked about Heather McKay, the Australian squash star who has joined the racquetball tour, Wendy shudders. "Heather McKay," she says slowly, pushing aside her backgammon game. "When you play Heather McKay, you're down 5-0 before the start of the match."

Since learning racquetball a scant year and a half ago, McKay has moved inexorably toward dominating it. Eight weeks after losing her first match on the tour, she reached the quarterfinals of the 1979 U.S. Open. Then in quick order she won the U.S. women's amateur, took a

continued



tour event, reached the finals of another and whipped defending national champion Karin Walton in an exhibition. Now wait a minute. What business does anyone—much less a 38-year-old woman, a foreigner, an interloper from another sport—have whipping up on the home-grown practitioners of our all-American game of speed and youth?

Well, for one thing, McKay has done this sort of thing before. In fact, she's spent her life in transition. From local tennis star to international squash sensation. From cleaning up at the Australian version of squash to wiping out the opposition in the slightly different British style of the game to blitzing her opponents in the markedly different American brand of the sport. For most of her 20-year squash career (1959-79), McKay kept switching back and forth between that game and field hockey, at which she was twice All-Australia. And now she's in transition from the top of the squash world to the highest levels of racquetball. In the process she's letting America in on a secret the international racquet

crowd has known for years—that McKay is one of the most extraordinary athletes of our time.

The switch from squash to racquetball is not as simple as it seems. True, squash and racquetball are indoor, four-wall racquet sports; true, racquetball is an easier game to learn than squash. But there are important differences. Racquetball is played on a large court with a short racquet and a large, bouncy ball. Squash is played on a small court with a long racquet and a small, less lively ball. A shot that hits the ceiling is in play in racquetball but not in squash. But the most important difference between the games is the standard putaway shot. In racquetball a shot that hits anywhere on the front wall and bounces twice before a play is made on it is a winner. A player can shoot for winners—usually very low shots—from anywhere on the court with a reasonable chance of success. But in squash the ball must hit the front wall above a sheet-metal "tin" or "telltale" that can be from 17 to 19 inches above the floor. Because squash shots, there-

fore, must be kept high, the ball cannot be put away as easily. A player must patiently maneuver his or her opponent out of position to win a point. Accordingly, to become expert at racquetball, a squash player must learn to go for winners at every opportunity, keep the ball lower, gauge new angles, hit and return a variety of unfamiliar serves and play the ceiling. The transition is by no means easy.

McKay is still making it. Though she has mastered most aspects of her new game, she almost invariably hits her kill shots too high off the front wall. Yet she wins. Astounding the racquetballers, she beats them at their own game by mixing in squash strategy. Standing near midcourt—pigeon-toed and bowlegged, swagging a little—she directs traffic. A shot to one side. A shot to the other. A cross-court. A multiwall shot. Scrambling wildly, the opponent is pressed merely to keep the ball in play. Eventually McKay takes the rally with a quick shot to an opening.

"The only thing squash helps me with is my passing shot," in-

sists McKay. "I have a lot to learn about racquetball." But because of her competitive experience, she has a significant edge. "She's 20% better than most of the other women," says Steve Keely, a racquetball pro who has instructed her, "because she reads shots so well and hits unexpected placements. Nobody can match her anticipation, racquet control and court sense."

Because rallies in women's pro racquetball are generally shorter and less tiring than those in squash, McKay should remain among the top players for several years despite her age. So McKay-watchers are already suggesting another transition. Forget about Heather's place among racquetball players, they say, and consider where she stands among the century's best athletes.

She stands tall. Her squash career is legendary. Until withdrawing from tournament competition in 1979, she had lost only two matches in two decades, a feat unmatched by any athlete, male or female, in any individual sport. Between 1962 and 1979 she lost none. "Many of us feel that Heather is the greatest squash player of all time," says U.S. pro Frank Satterthwaite, whose book, *The Three-Wall Nick and Other Angles (A Squash Autobiography)*, is the word on the game. "Certainly her record is unparalleled, probably unapproachable."

Intelligent athletes who have watched McKay on the court say she could star in almost any sport. In January she won an invitational racquetball tournament in which all the competitors were pros from other sports (McKay entered as a squash pro, having decided to remain an amateur in racquetball until the end of the tournament). The other finalists were men—three from football, one from basketball, one from baseball. After losing to her in the round robin, they agreed that her skills were those of a formidable all-round athlete.

In a *Supersnars* competition that was telecast in March, McKay finished third among 14 women, some of whom were young enough to be her daughters. She placed among the top five finishers in six of seven events. The seventh was the 440, in which she ran seventh. Yes, McKay is human. She has excellent reflexes but only average speed. As her husband, Brian, puts it, "She couldn't disappear on a dark night."

"You do what has to be done," McKay says simply from time to time.

continued



Heather's husband Brian is also an accomplished athlete

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Oh, that succinct Aussie play ethic. It's no wonder that Australia has turned into a nation of jocks. And jockettes: many of the country's top athletes—Margaret Court, Dawn Fraser, McKay—have been women.

McKay's background is a classic one for an Aussie athlete: large family, small town. Heather Blundell was born on July 31, 1941 in Queanbeyan, a town of about 5,000 in the sheep and cattle country outside the capital city of Canberra. She is the eighth of Frank and Dulcie Blundell's 11 children. Once one of New South Wales' best Rugby League fullbacks, Frank supported his family by working from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. in a bakery. Until his retirement, he routinely spent most of his waking hours playing with his kids.

"Six of us—my parents, two brothers, a sister and I—would play Sunday tennis tournaments at the club," says Heather. "If they wanted somebody to throw the ball in cricket, I'd do it. If they wanted somebody to kick it in soccer, I'd do that."

A sister, Kay, was a local tennis star. A brother, Kenny, was a standout in tennis and cricket. Three other sisters excelled in field hockey. But Heather was plainly the best. She took up tennis at age 10 and six years later was Queanbeyan's junior and senior women's champion, titles she would hold for three years. Though she stoutly denies it, her father and others who watched her play feel she could have been another Court. She learned field hockey at 13, and it was not long before the hustling left inner was the best player on her high school squad and a regular on the town team as well.

When McKay was 18 an auto dealer named Leo Casey added a couple of squash courts to his showroom as a publicity gimmick. Looking for a way to keep their legs in shape during the field-hockey off-season, McKay and some teammates began playing squash. McKay quickly ran out of competition and started practicing with men. As luck would have it—and there is a certain amount of luck, mixed with considerable opportunism in her story—Vin Napier, head of the Australian Squash Rackets Association, happened to see her in a tournament. Afterward, he suggested she play



To hone her racquetball skills, McKay works out with men

in the upcoming New South Wales Championships. "Those girls are too good for me," said McKay, a bashful teen-ager. "You might be surprised," said Napier. McKay reluctantly agreed. Indeed, she surprised herself—and her opponents—by winning the junior title.

She also reached the senior quarter-finals against Yvonne West, the eventual winner. McKay built up a big lead—2-1 in games and 8-2 in the fourth game. Because Australian squash matches are played best-of-5 nine-point games (in the U.S., the games go to 15), she had six match points to fitter away. And that's what she did. To overcome her considerable fatigue and to end the match as quickly as possible, she started trying placements she hadn't mastered and lost. It was the last time she would ever play unconservative squash.

Her strong showing earned her a place on the state team for the 1960 Australian nationals. It was quite a feat just to be there, especially since she had been playing squash for less than a year. Incredibly, she won the tournament. It mattered not that she was little more than a retriever, she got to everything. "To my mind, winning that tournament was the best thing she ever did," says Jean Walker, who played with McKay on one national and six state teams. "To be unknown and win a national tournament is unheard of."

An Australian team was going to Great Britain the following winter. According to Napier, had McKay been on it, she

might have been rushed into international competition before she was physically or emotionally ready. But, by prior agreement, the Australian team was to consist exclusively of state champions. Because West was the New South Wales champion, McKay stayed home. "That was probably the best thing that ever happened to her," says Napier. "Before she went to Britain, she was able to settle down and learn something about the game."

McKay had some learning to do. She knew little about shotmaking but had a quick grasp for such things. She never had to be told anything twice. Napier handed her a technical manual he had written, and she all but memorized it. When Pakistan's celebrated Hashim Kahn, who was touring Australia, told her to go for more winners when she was in good position, she never forgot it.

Now committed to squash, McKay hung up her tennis racket and moved from Queanbeyan, where she had been working as clerk in a stationery store, to Sydney, where she supported herself as a receptionist at the Bellevue Hills Squash Club.

It was there that she met Brian McKay, a lathe operator by day, who taught squash at the club in the evenings. They were married four years later. Though Brian had been an outstanding rugby and cricket player and has always been able to hold his own against Heather on the squash court, he has never made a living in competitive sport.

When the McKays met, Heather was tense, overtrained and smoking. Brian got her to reduce her training and concentrate instead on practicing shots for no more than an hour at a time. "If you work out too hard," he told her, "you get exhausted. And then where's your strength?" Heather eventually relaxed and cut out smoking on her own.

By early 1962 Heather was ready to travel. She had won her second Australian national title, and the British were waiting. The citizens of Queanbeyan passed the hat and collected £231 to pay for her plane fare.

Leaving Australia was a frightening prospect for McKay. The "girl from the bush," as other players called her, was still only 20. Fortunately, when she got

continued

off the plane in London, "shy and bloody near tongue-tied," the grande dame of British squash, Janet Morgan, was there to greet her. Morgan had won the British championship 10 consecutive times. The first of McKay's international "mums" took the kid under her wing, tutoring her in the social graces as well as changing her backhand grip to rid her of a lingering tennis elbow. Ten years later, when McKay won her 11th straight British title to break Morgan's record, Morgan presented her with an engraved bowl.

Before playing for her first British championship, McKay warmed up in the Scottish Nationals, which began just 10 days after her arrival in London. She was unaccustomed to the British ball, which is spongier and denser than the Australian one, so it was no surprise that she lost a five-game final to Fran Marshall, Great Britain's No. 1 player. "Don't worry," McKay wrote home, "it won't happen again." What she meant was that she wouldn't lose again on her 1962 trip. What she didn't realize was that she would never lose again, period.

The following week she beat Marshall 3-1 in the North of England finals. There followed two weeks of practice under the famous Egyptian coach, Dardar Ali El-Bakary, who honed the skills that eventually made McKay unbeatable—footwork, anticipation and her special ability to read where an opponent's shot will go even before it's hit. Then she shut out de-

fending champion Marshall to win the British nationals.

After that it was into the record books: 14 Australian championships, 16 British titles, the only two women's world tournaments ever played, every major trophy in North America. And all the while she played field hockey in her spare time. In 1967, the first of the two years in which McKay was voted all-Australia in hockey, her two-sport parley proved irresistible to Aussie sportswriters. They voted her the nation's highest athletic honor, Australian Athlete of the Year. Her competition included record-breaking runners Herb Elliott and Ron Clarke and world bantamweight champion Lionel Rose.

Winning everything in sight wasn't without its challenges. How, for openers, to stay interested? McKay once let up and nearly lost. Never again. Playing weaker opponents, she resolved to get off the court as quickly as possible. "I would usually give away one point so that it wouldn't be 9-0, 9-0, 9-0," she says. "But if I gave away any more, the other player wouldn't have gotten any satisfaction. People would've said, 'Well, Heather wasn't trying.' This way they knew that my opponent earned the extra points." If McKay did anything at all to extend a match, it was to practice shots she wasn't entirely comfortable with or to perfect subtle things—hiding pain and fatigue, disguising shots until the last pos-

sible second. She developed two personalities: open and gregarious off the court, hard-nosed and deceptive on it, as befits an avid player of Liar Poker. Her philosophy was: There is always something to work on—and it made even the easiest win a profitable one.

For the longest time, though, that was the only profit McKay got out of squash. Until the British opened their national championships to professionals in 1974, McKay remained an amateur. Because her jobs as a receptionist and bookkeeper at squash clubs paid poorly, she was obliged to supplement her income. At one point she moonlighted as a telephone dispatcher for a cab company. Not even by combining her pay with her husband's could McKay live in real comfort.

Finally the McKays came up with a money-making gambit: They would go on tour, bringing squash to the outback and picking up pocket money in the process. So they hit the road—first in Australia, later in Britain and South Africa. The script rarely varied. They would arrive in town in time to attend a tea of the delighted small-town mayor would throw for them. Then they'd squeeze in a couple of interviews, rest a bit at the hotel, have dinner and head over to the club for their show. First, Heather would take apart the local champion, usually a man. Brian would come out and play her. They would keep the score as close as possible. If Heather was off, Brian would hit a few tens. If Brian was off, Heather would keep her shots high. They would then demonstrate some of the game's fine points and afterward mingle with the townfolk. If Heather had any shyness left, she soon outgrew it in the process of charming a new crowd every night. "It was important to socialize," says Brian. "If they had any doubts about what we were saying, we could make our points more personally. And it was good to meet other people. Otherwise we'd have gone for weeks speaking to no one but each other."

The next day they would be off to another town. On one tour through New South Wales and Victoria, they had one free night in six weeks. "The trips were great for both of us," says Brian. "We got to sightsee, pick up expense money and publicize squash. It was wonderful for Heather's squash, too. Every night she had a new opponent. And you wouldn't have believed the condition of the courts. We played on one in



Although she withdrew from competitive squash a year ago, McKay keeps her hand in as an instructor.

continued

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South Africa where the paint hadn't dried. There was talcum powder all over the front wall, and every time the ball hit the wall the powder came off. Pretty soon the floor was covered. On another court there were wooden beams and cobwebs where there was supposed to be a ceiling. Great training."

But not great compensation. As the years passed, McKay grew increasingly bitter about the lack of recognition in her home country. Her only tangible reward was a TV deodorant commercial. Covering her tournaments, Australian writers counted not her wins or losses but the number of games she gave up. When it became obvious she wouldn't lose more than one or two games a year, they took to adding up her opponent's points. "If someone got five or six in a game, they'd write that I was over the hill," McKay says. "They thought I was a machine."

In the early '70s squash was beginning to boom in Toronto, New York and Philadelphia. There was even talk of big-money tournaments. So when the Toronto Squash Club offered the McKays teaching jobs in 1975, they took off for Canada. They first rented an apartment in the Beach section of Toronto so they could jog along Lake Ontario. But the neighborhood soon became too noisy—"too in," as Heather puts it—and they looked for the quietest place they could find. They settled for a two-bedroom house on a sedate, middle-class street of nearly identical bungalows.

There's a world of difference between the retriever-oriented international squash game, which is played on a spacious court with a slow ball and a high, 19-inch tin, and the U.S.-Canadian game, with its small court, lower 17-inch tin and "fister ball that puts a premium on placements. Heather made the change in a few weeks and spent the next four years cleaning up at American tournaments. Unfortunately, "cleaning up" is something of an overstatement. Men's champion Sharif Khan can make good money by winning tournaments such as the Mennen Cup (\$13,500 for first place) and the North American Open (\$10,000). McKay's biggest purse was \$2,000, and in her most profitable year, she netted a little more than \$5,000.

Nonetheless, she didn't switch to racquetball strictly to make money. "There was nothing left for me to accomplish

in squash," she says, "except to do it over again." Having long since determined to get out of squash before losing another match, McKay decided the time had come when she suffered a rare case of nerves at the 1979 World Open and dropped two games. The previous year she had been invited to an invitational racquetball tournament. Though she had never played the game, she learned it on the spot and reached the semifinals.

In February 1979 McKay entered the U.S. squash nationals, a tournament she had never played. She won it, earning \$500, to complete an unofficial squash Grand Slam. McKay may have played in her last squash tournament—unless, suddenly, the money becomes right.

If McKay expected to realize wealth beyond her dreams, courtesy of the National Racquetball Club, she's been sorely disappointed. To be sure, she has made a couple of killings—\$19,600 for finishing third in Superstars, \$40,000 for winning the all-pro celebrity racquetball invitational, a promo for a beer company—but those are incidental trash sports, not the professional racquetball tour.

That 40 grand is more money than any other female racquetball player has made in her entire career. Racquetball grew out of handball, a game traditionally played by men at the neighborhood Y. The male racquetball players' view of their female counterparts is a haughty one, roughly akin to that of the boys who let the girls into their clubhouse on the condition that they keep their mouths shut. At most tournaments the total purse had been \$15,000 for men and \$6,000 for women, with the men getting prime time on the exhibition courts. The males justify this arrangement by arguing that neither sponsors nor spectators are particularly interested in the women.

Depending on whose version you believe, early this year the increasingly restive women either chose to leave the NRC tour or were thrown off it. In either case, their lot hasn't improved. Dan Seaton, the commissioner of the Women's Professional Racquetball Association, conducted a tournament on Long Island, but he forgot to ask McKay if she could play. The dates of the tournament coincided with those of the beer-company invitational. Lacking their most famous athlete, the women were

ignored by the New York media. Seaton has scheduled another tournament in California and hopes to have a national in June. In the meantime McKay is playing exhibitions against Karin Walton as an adjunct to the men's tour.

Typically, Heather and Brian have found cause for hope. "The sport still isn't very well known," says Brian. "If I could learn it, maybe we could go on tour and give exhibitions, as we did in squash. It would be a new challenge."

But at this stage it's more important for Heather to play racquetball than to promote it. Eventually either Seaton will start a separate, Virginia Slims-style women's tour or, as seems more likely, the women will rejoin the men's tour. When order is restored, McKay will face the one major challenge that she has never encountered in sport—learning to play under pressure.

In field hockey she was just one of 11 women on her team. In squash she was invariably too good to be pressed. The textbook she co-wrote—*Heather McKay's Complete Book of Squash*—is filled with sound, conservative advice. "[To regain lost concentration] Don't hit any stupid shots or take any risky moves. . . . When you cut out the frills and theories, what you're trying to do on the court is move your opponent deep with one shot, then take him short with another, and somewhere between the rushing around smack a winner past him or in front of him or around him. . . . I don't advocate that you go for anything fancy in the way of an answer to a serve."

A restrained approach is understandable for someone who is invariably the favorite: McKay didn't have the best short game in women's squash for the simple reason that she has never had to learn one. But her advantage in racquetball is by no means as pronounced as it was in squash. She has lost some close racquetball games by missing simple ceiling shots and making other unforced errors. It's just another challenge, just another transition, but it will be interesting to see how she adjusts to it.

"You have to play perfectly to beat her," says Sarah Green, one of three tour players who has. "You know you can't psych her or wear her down. She hasn't completed the changeover from squash yet, but when she does, it will be all over for the rest of us."

I'm not sure I can say this without using a lot of exorbitant exclamation points and a few tired jokes, but the fact is that you can't discuss the subject of television sports very long without acknowledging that one of the most popular games on the tube is bowling. Yes, bowling. The Pro Bowlers Tour on ABC is in its 19th season on the air and possesses a long list of what TV types call "positive stats."

After NCAA football, the PBA show is the second-longest-running live sports series; its ratings, which have always been among the highest in weekend sports television, have rarely been better than they are this year. Through last weekend, bowling had a 9.1 rating (the percentage of the nation's TV-equipped homes tuned in to the PBA show) and 24 share (the percentage of those actually watching television who were looking at bowling).

The Pro Bowlers Tour has won head-to-head ratings wars with, among others, golf, tennis and pro and college basketball. Bowlers like nothing better than to dig out the figures for the Saturday last spring when bowling went up against the Masters and major league baseball and won the ratings battle with something to spare. The numbers: Pro Bowlers Tour (ABC) 8.9, Baseball Game of the Week (NBC) 7.4, the Masters (CBS) 6.6.

In addition to the winter tour on ABC, NBC is picking up a few summer tournaments, and ESPN, the all-sports cable network, will televise some of the other stops on the summer PBA tour. In all, 36 bowling tournaments will get national airtime this year.

Much of bowling's popularity can be attributed to the ingeniously simple game concept that was devised by ABC. The format is built on a king-of-the-hill principle that ensures there will be sudden-death drama on every show. In midweek action at each tournament five bowlers qualify for the weekend's television showdown. The show opens with the No. 5 finisher meeting the No. 4 man. The winner goes on to play the No. 3 qual-



BO BURTON'S HELPING TO GET THE PBA OUT OF THE GUTTER

THE BOWLING TOUR IS ROLLING DOWN THE RIGHT ALLEY

ifier and so on, setting up a final between the survivor and the No. 1 man, who already has earned 50% of the tournament's first prize by finishing first in the qualifying play.

It is a glorified game show, and game shows, of course, have always been a favorite on daytime television. A viewer doesn't need to know anything about bowling or previous competitions to get caught up in any one show. There's the drama of the No. 5 man trying to knock off the finishers ahead of him, combined with the suspense of waiting for the appearance of the No. 1 man. There's a sudden-death denouement every 18 minutes or so, and the whole thing is packaged into a comfortable hour and a half that includes a bowling up Neat.

The concept, introduced by ABC's Ned Sieckel when he took over production of the show in 1967 (PBA viewing audience jumped 21% with the new format), works so well that it's a wonder golf and basketball haven't come up with their own king-of-the-hill formulas: How about a shootout in which 32 golfers go one-on-one at 16 different holes, then the 16 survivors play eight one-hole matches, and so on, until there is a final showdown played between the last two survivors? Ridiculous, you say. Maybe so, unless the format cured golf's ratings ills.

To be sure, bowling has gone far out of its way to accommodate TV, but there was little

else it could do. It had always suffered from lack of acceptance in some areas because of its seedy, beer-bar image.

The sport has smoothed up its act for national TV to the point where the show has become almost antiseptic. There's no drinking or cursing or raucous dress, no T-shirts that advertise Acme Plumbing. The tone may be a bit dull, but it's also thoroughly professional, an impression that's buttressed by excellent camera coverage by ABC and an engaging announcing team that features the comfortable old face of Chris Schenkel and one of the most expert analysts on television in Nelson (Bo) Burton Jr.

Directors Jim Jennett and Larry Cavallina alternate quick shots of the contending bowlers to play up the tension, and the slow-motion replays zeroing in on the expressions of the participants as they body-English ball down the lanes are among the most entertaining to sports TV.

The personable Burton brings an innate quality to his commentary and is somehow able to speak to the knowledgeable viewer without leaving the uninitiated bewildered. Dave Diles, who sometimes fills in for Schenkel, calls Burton "a matinee idol who knows what he's talking about." Burton, a 37-year-old part-time student at St. Louis University, is the sixth all-time money winner on the PBA tour. He made the top five in two of the first 14 tournaments this year; on those occasions he relinquished his announcing duties to the less skillful Dick Weber.

Burton is upbeat yet candid; he's not at all reluctant to point out when some adept conditioning of the lanes has played a part in producing exceedingly high scores. He's at almost perfect front man for a sport intent on elevating its image, but he goes too far when he junks the time-honored term "gutter" for the sanitized "channel."

Thanks to television and Bo, bowling is so far removed from the gutter that he can call a gutter a gutter.

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Young and her caddy had a nose for the greens, but Alcott blew key putts on the final round.



Donna was prima in the Dinah

Donna Caponi Young won the richest event on the women's tour, but the one having the worst prospect for enduring

From Sandra Palmer's 30 on the front nine on Thursday until Donna Caponi Young completed her 13-under-par 275 on Sunday, the Colgate-Dinah Shore Winners Circle record book and Palm Springs' Mission Hills golf course took a beating. The desert wind, which customarily springs up in the early afternoon and serves as the protector of par on the 41 golf courses that green California's Coachella Valley from Palm Springs east to Indio, hardly made itself felt for three of the four days of the tournament. And on Saturday, when the wind finally blew hard for a couple of hours, it had no noticeable effect on the players, although it whipped up a beige fog of dust and sand that obscured the San Jacinto mountains, sent a large umbrella 100 yards into a lake behind the 18th green and played havoc with wearers of contact lenses.

Young, who had started the day in a four-way tie for the lead with Jane Bلاك, Pat Meyers and Amy Alcott, was on the 8th hole when the wind sprang up. It bothered her so much that she birdied the 8th, eagled the 9th and birdied the 10th to take the lead alone for the first time.

From that point on, Young, with only Alcott in close pursuit, left the rest of the field far behind. She led Alcott by one and everyone else by at least five strokes after the third round, and on Sunday she fared only twice, the first time when she bogeyed the 10th hole and the second when she bogeyed the last hole, by which time it no longer mattered. All

it meant, in fact, was that she broke the tournament record by one stroke instead of two.

"Donna was awesome today," said Alcott, who had tied her three times during the final round, only to bogey the 15th and 18th and lose by two strokes. Alcott was speaking in the press tent. A voice from the rear shouted, "I was awesome all week!" Unbeknownst to Alcott or anyone else, Young had hidden herself behind a curtain. Alcott didn't bat an eye. "No you weren't," she said. "You were consistent all week. You were awesome today."

Consistent Young was. Awesome, too. She missed only two greens on the final day in spite of the pressure imposed by a prestigious tournament that she had never won and the lure of a \$37,500 first prize—more money than had ever been within her grasp. In fact, Young missed only five or six greens all week. But she was proudest of her putting. Her mentor is Dave Stockton, and the two had talked about putting on the phone for 20 minutes the night before the last round.

She also discussed every putt at length with her young caddy, Dana Derouaux. Their mouths could be seen moving furiously and usually simultaneously every time they lined one up. Young recently underwent an operation on her noble Italian nose to correct a deviated septum. At one point on Sunday when the pressure was making it hard to breathe, Derouaux said, "Breathe through your new nose!" "I can't," she wailed.

During the final round, Alcott wore her lucky Dodger cap, one she has had since she was nine years old, but it didn't do the trick. She did, however, have the satisfaction of shooting the low round of the week on the second day, a 65 that tied the tournament record, and she also took home \$24,500, which will probably cover the down payment on her new condominium in Santa Monica.

The long-awaited head-to-head confrontation between 41-year-old JoAnne Carner and Nancy Lopez-Melton again failed to materialize. Carner had played eight of the nine events on the schedule and had won four of them, and she was

continued



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tired. "Age has nothing to do with it," she said after she had missed the cut for the first time in her life the week before the Dinah Shore. "I was burned out mentally." She had gotten off to a similar start last year, and then, too, there had been the delightful prospect of a rousing fight for No. 1 between Carner and Lopez-Melton. But in May, when Carner had already won three tournaments, she took a bad spill off her motorcycle near her fishing cabin on the Tellico River in Tennessee. When her husband found her, she was standing dazed in the middle of the road, blood streaming down both arms and one side of her face, holding her Honda Trail 90 and saying, "It won't start." Don Carner later determined that she had had to haul the 125-pound bike 15 feet up a steep, muddy embankment to get to where she was standing. Injuries to her wrists kept her off the tour for most of the rest of the year.

Lopez-Melton, meanwhile, after a golfless winter, started the season slowly but picked up the pace when the tour reached California in early March. She finished fourth in Los Angeles, second in Las Vegas and then won her first tournament of the year, the Women's Kemper Open in Costa Mesa, Calif. She was having uncharacteristic difficulties, however, in dealing with her slow start. "When I was playing poorly I could feel the vibrations of the people and what they were thinking," she told a *Los Angeles Times* reporter at Costa Mesa. "They're not against you, but they think every shot is easy, and when you miss it, they say, 'I don't know how you missed that shot.' That's really aggravating."

The only cloud hanging over the tournament, which was played under an otherwise blue sky, was whether or not it might be the last. Colgate-Palmolive, the founder of the event in 1972 and owner of the course on which it is played, was rumored to be about to abandon its baby.

To many players, Young among them, the association of the LPGA with Colgate is as important emotionally as it is financially, and the prospect of the two parting ways is almost unimaginable. The Palm Springs tournament is not only the richest on the U.S. LPGA schedule, but also the one true glamour event the women play all year, a sort of cross between the Masters and the Crosby, a week-long fling in a California resort at the height

of the season with trappings unrivaled anywhere on any tour—a good, well-groomed golf course, plush accommodations, lavish parties under the desert stars and the kind of hospitality that has traditionally made the golfers feel at least as important as the aging TV figures, over-the-hill athletes and ex-Presidents who are known generically as "celebrities" at California golf tournaments.

For the veteran players the tournament symbolizes the LPGA's breakthrough into the big time. In 1972, under the guidance of President and Chief Executive Officer David R. Foster, Colgate became the first major corporate patron of women's professional golf. Foster and Colgate gave the LPGA its first \$100,000 purse and its first nationwide promotional push with a series of TV ads for Colgate products that made household faces out of women golfers who previously had been only names in agate type in the sports section. Colgate and Foster didn't create the LPGA tour, but their corporate weight did establish its credibility as a business proposition.

From women's golf, Colgate moved on, in the late '70s, into men's and women's tennis with the Colgate Grand Prix and the Colgate Series, respectively, and into men's golf with the Colgate Hall of Fame Classic at Pinehurst. But the fondest commitment, at least in Foster's eyes, was always to the LPGA.

Then, in January 1979, all that changed. Foster was removed from his job and replaced by Keith Crane, a man who, like Foster, had risen through the corporate ranks but who had emerged at the top with a different set of priorities. Quickly Colgate began to divest itself of its involvements in professional sports. Last year saw the end of three of Colgate's women's golf tournaments, worth a total of \$400,000 in prize money.

But the new management couldn't seem to make up its mind about what to do with its flagship event, the Dinah Shore, which, among other things, had the fourth-highest rating among all televised golf events last year, men's and women's. Colgate vacillated until last August before announcing it would sponsor the tournament at least once more and then review the matter of its continuing involvement.

It is a serious matter indeed. Only dur-

ing the first four months of the year do people watch golf on television in numbers sufficient to cause a stir along Madison Avenue, where decisions about how to spend advertising money are made. In order, the four highest-rated televised golf shows of 1979 were the Bob Hope Desert Classic in January, the Bing Crosby Pro-Am in February, the Masters in April and the Colgate-Dinah Shore the week before the Masters. Once spring arrives, those who care about golf tend to play it rather than watch it, with the result that even an event as prestigious as the U.S. Open in June doesn't draw flies on television.

The dates of the Colgate-Dinah Shore are particularly desirable to the LPGA because they are opposite the Greater Greensboro Open on the men's tour, which isn't covered by network television. The women have the airways to themselves and, because of that, get their best national exposure of the year.

Last week, as the tournament got under way, so did negotiations between LPGA Commissioner Ray Volpe and Jack Grimm, Crane's vice-president for sports and recreation. Rumors flew through the condominiums, one of them being that Crane wants to move the tournament to a summer date on the East Coast, closer to Colgate's corporate headquarters in New York City and farther away from Foster, who now lives on the edge of the Mission Hills course. Another story was that four acceptable sponsors, including Honda and McDonald's, are ready to move in the minute Colgate relinquishes the tournament and that all four are prepared to invite Foster to run the show. Foster himself, puttering around his antique shop on Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs' main drag, had this to say: "If Colgate isn't going to do it right, they should let it go and let someone else come in and do it the way it should be done."

By Saturday there was at least an indication of movement, if not progress. Colgate agreed to reach a decision within 10 days. One company official said the situation was looking good, that Crane now had a better idea of what the tournament was worth to the company and that three of his vice-presidents had submitted memos favorable to retaining it.

Which should make Young, and all the rest, breathe a bit easier. **END**

Who's new socks it to a Who's Who

Pat Valenzuela, 17, recently lost his apprentice standing, but he's more than holding his own against the best, and why not? He certainly has the bloodlines

California horseplayers scanning a *Racing Form* encounter a veritable Who's Who of jockeydom: national riding champions Delahoussaye E. Hawley S. McCarron C. J. McHargue D. G. Pincay L. Jr. and Shoemaker W. Nevertheless, more often than not, the name that captures their eye is Valenzuela P. A., who until late last month was "Patrick Valenzuela in the Santa Anita program. The asterisk, or "bug," identified Pat Valenzuela, 17, as an apprentice with a five-pound weight allowance whenever he rode. And when he rode he gave his elders fits, becoming, among other things, the first apprentice to win more than \$1 million at Santa Anita. But what, people wondered, would happen when he lost his bug.

What happened was that on his first day without the allowance Valenzuela P. A. rode three winners in a row. Three days later he won the first stakes race of his career, on Great Lady M in the \$46,100 Las Cienegas. Soon after that he scored a stunning upset with a 25-to-1 shot, Codex, in the prestigious Santa Anita Derby. That was a nice little race worth \$184,700, including a winner's share of \$117,200.

"I knew right along that I wouldn't have too much trouble adapting to riding without the bug," says Valenzuela. "Many trainers had been using me in stakes races anyway, and I didn't have the five pounds then. But the win on Codex should help me a great deal because it'll bring more attention to me."

How much attention does the kid want? In the jockey's rooms the other riders had already been giving him a rough time because he was taking huge sums out of their pockets. As Valenzuela watched videotapes of his races, another

jockey might say, "Bug, you moved too quickly on that horse," or, "You had trouble switching your stack, Bug." But Valenzuela rarely answered back, taking the guff with good grace, responding most often with a wan smile.

If the kidding threatened to get out of hand, Valenzuela I, for Ismael, more commonly known as Milo, stepped in. Milo, 46, but still a rider on the California tracks, is Pat's uncle and the most famous of the five Valenzuelas who have ridden in the U.S. Milo won the Kentucky Derby twice, with Tim Tam and Forward Pass, and he rode the great Kelso better than anyone else.

Milo's eyes would twinkle with amusement as he watched Shoemaker W. Pincay L. and others needle his nephew. "He took it very well," Milo says. "I know this boy can ride, and I'm not saying that just because I'm his uncle. Hell, he can horseback. There are times when I get on his case pretty hard. There are also times when he gets pretty stubborn when I criticize him, but he does many things right."

Breaking into the Top 10 in the jockey standings at Santa Anita is a little like elbowing into the starting lineup of the 1927 New York Yankees. Since the track's current meeting opened on Dec. 26, however, Pat Valenzuela has ridden so well that he is in third place behind Pincay and McCarron with 81 winners. As an apprentice he averaged better than a winner a day, surpassing the victory totals of any bug boy in Santa Anita's history, including Walter Blum, Bill Boland and Bill Shoemaker. As of last Saturday, his mounts had earned \$1,305,080 in 1980, placing him in the Top 10 in the national earnings standings.

Valenzuela's long suit as a rider is his

tremendous ability to break a horse from the starting gate quickly. Getting a quick start is more rewarding at Santa Anita, Hollywood Park and Del Mar than on other racing circuits because the emphasis on speed in California is almost excessive. "People keep talking about how quick Pat is from the gate," says Trainer John Fulton, "but he can also ride from behind. I know because he has done it to me a few times."

Pat Valenzuela's father, Albino, rode in the 1950s, as did his other uncles, Angel Jr., Mano and Santiago. Yet another uncle, Martin, is a trainer. Pat lives with Milo near the Santa Anita track. In the evening Milo critiques videotapes of his nephew's races and goes over the past performances of the horses Pat will ride the following day.

"It was Milo who encouraged me to try Santa Anita the winter before last," Pat says. "I had already ridden winners in New Mexico, and I wanted to see what I could do in the big time. Milo had looked at the apprentices riding at Santa Anita and thought I might have a chance to get my feet on the ground, but he told me it wouldn't be easy. I came to California and started to gallop horses in the morning. I got some mounts, but at first I didn't have much luck."

Then in the spring and summer Pat began to shine. He rode 26 winners at Hollywood Park, 21 of them in the last five weeks of the 77-day meeting. At Del Mar he rode 35 winners to finish fourth in the standings behind Pincay, McCarron and McHargue. He also became known as a rider who could "send" a horse but had trouble saving something for the finish, not an uncommon criticism of a young jockey.

These days he gets up each morning
continued



Photographed at the North Pole. Latitude 90° N. Longitude 0°

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HORSE RACING continued

before six, drives to the track with Milo and gallops horses. At 10 a.m. he goes to Arcadia Continuance High School, where he takes English, reading and business math. He has a little over a year to go for a diploma.

"I work pretty hard in school," Put says, "but I'm not a star there or anything like that. Most of the other students kid me a lot and read the papers to see how I'm doing. But it's funny. I admire the students there a lot more than they know. They're going there to improve themselves."

After school Valenzuela returns to the track, where he often rides the full nine-race card. Until he lost his apprenticeship, Valenzuela's services were in such demand that he had ridden more races than any of the big-name jockeys on the grounds: 66 more than Pincay, 23 more than McCarron.

"He'll have to keep up that rate to draw even with Milo, who in 31 years has won some 2,600 races and \$20 million in purses while punishing himself almost daily to make weight. 'I can make 115 now,' he says, a smile growing on his leathery face. 'It's the lowest I've been in years. I can still ride well and it is what I want to do and want to keep doing.'"

Milo rides about six races a week, quite a few less than in, say, 1956, when he fashioned three remarkable upsets. He beat Nashua with Mister Gus, Swaps with Porterhouse and Bold Ruler with Nashville. But Milo could find trouble too; once he was beaten over the head with a pool cue in a barroom when he



started fighting taunters who cilled him "wetback."

Milo was one of 22 children—only 12 lived—born to Angel and Jesus Valenzuela in McNary, Texas. The family moved to Mexico when Milo was 3. "There were more than 22 kids around the house," he says, "because my mother would adopt other children and give them things to eat. We didn't have much, but we were happy. My father loved Mexico. When I was a kid, we were living on a farm in Porvenir, and I was riding horses, sheep and donkeys. It was adobe huts, beans and hot in Porvenir. My father was sick from an infection for 32 years; he wouldn't move out of Mexico because he wanted to die there. He would boil up poison ivy to cure the fever. He would drink it down and maybe it helped. The

Pat, who is particularly adept at breaking from the gate and going for the lead, is riding so well that he ranks among the national leaders in earnings.

one thing I've always said about him is that he holds the record for having an infection."

By the time Milo was 11 he was competing in match races in tiny towns, down roads and through fields. In 1950 he began riding thoroughbreds in the U.S., and eventually he had some tremendous years. In 1958 he rode Calumet Farm's *Tim Tam* to victory in the Kentucky Derby and Preakness. The horse broke down in the stretch in the Belmont. "Jimmy Jones, Tim Tam's trainer, and I stood out in front of Tim Tam's stall and cried like babies," Milo says. A decade later Valenzuela rode *Forward Pass*, another Calumet colt, in the Derby. He was beaten by *Dancer's Image*, but when a positive postrace Butazolidin test of *Dancer's Image* was disclosed, *Forward Pass* was declared the winner. Litigation ensued. "I finally did get the trophy and the check for the Derby," Milo says. "It was five years after the race was run."

The pressure of keeping in shape has taken its toll on Milo, but he has kept riding. In 1976 he had only eight winners, but didn't give up. "I can still make a living riding and exercising horses," he says. This year Valenzuela has had five winners in 86 races. "I'm going to stick with riding for as long as I possibly can," he says. "But the great joy in my life right now is watching Pat every day. He has put the Valenzuela name up in big lights again."

END



LAND



In the first Alpine-style ascent of the formidable South Face of Argentina's Cerro Aconcagua, the Western Hemisphere's highest peak, Guy Andrews (above) and two other intrepid Californians struggled across snowfields, up towers, over ledges. Then *El Viento Blanco* came howling in

OF THE WHITE WIND

BY SAM MOSES

CONTINUED

THE WHITE WIND

continued



Expedition leader Connor (left), 38, chose Bludworth, 25, and Andrews, 20, to climb with him

A mountain-climbing expedition is considered successful when at least one member of its party reaches the summit. Last New Year's Eve three Americans set out to climb Cerro Aconcagua in the Argentinian Andes, which, at 22,834 feet, is the highest mountain in the Western Hemisphere. It was a successful expedition.

Aconcagua can be climbed from the north, east or south. The most common route, the one from the north, is by no means easy—it has claimed the lives of more than 200 climbers, most of whom were felled by storms, avalanches and/or altitude—but it is basically just a trek. Its slope so gradual that technical rock and ice climbing are not necessary. The north route is climbed regularly, and often serves as the way down after an ascent of the South Face. The eastern route is slightly more difficult and, thus, somewhat less frequently climbed than the northern one.

Until the end of last year, only six expeditions had reached the summit of Aconcagua by ascending the South Face. 10,000 precipitous feet of intimidating towers and chimneys, rock overhangs and enormous vertical icefalls. The Incas named the South Face *Aconcahuasi*, or "sentinel of stone." Reinhold Messner, the larger-than-life Austrian climber who conquered Aconcagua from the south in 1974, describes it in his book *Big Walls*: "Several kilometers wide at its base and standing three kilometers high, it towers over the Horcones Glacier, encircled by a bleak landscape of snow-

fields, rubble and dead glaciers. The face is continually swept by avalanches and, tucked away as it is in the remotest corner of the Horcones Valley, its complete isolation and the constant wind merely accentuate its wild and menacing aspect. But only the view from the top, looking down at the giant bow of the glacier, reveals the true and awesome magnitude of this face."

The South Face was first climbed in 1954 by a six-man French expedition under the most trying conditions. The climbers were on the mountain nearly a month, and their final assault took seven days. On the last day a storm nearly froze them to the face. They suffered severe frostbite—all but one of the climbers had to have fingers or toes amputated—but they succeeded. Since then, the South Face has been scaled by Argentinian, Chilean, Austrian and Japanese teams. All of these climbs employed "expedition tactics" to some extent—that is, as the climbers made their assaults, they constructed and supplied camps along their route and ran fixed ropes upward from each camp. Each night the climbers had a warm and secure place to rest up for the next day's ascent.

Before the American attempt, no one had tried to scale the South Face Alpine-style—that is, with the climbers carrying all their equipment on their backs, bivouacking wherever they could at night.

Andrews leads the way up Rock Step on Day One when the climbers covered 2,300 vertical feet



sometimes without even a tent, and climbing in one continuous push. By any method, an ascent of the South Face, in Messner's words, "represents an adventure, a mountaineering achievement, and an experience worthy of profound respect." But the first successful Alpine climb of the South Face of Cerro Aconcagua was an accomplishment of even greater magnitude, and it is one of the few American firsts in mountaineering.

The leader of the U.S. expedition was Ed Connor, 38, a civil engineer from Palm Springs, Calif. and the owner of a small construction company that builds golf courses in the desert. Connor took up climbing comparatively late in life, when he was nearly 30, and he was less



On Day Three, at approximately 19,000 feet, Bludworth takes the lead over the Sandstone Band



active at it than most expedition climbers. On Mount McKinley in 1973 he had learned to deal with changing weather conditions. He had made an Alpine ascent of 18,700-foot Mount Orizaba in Mexico in 1977, the following year he had been on a seven-man expedition that came close to claiming a new route up 24,767-foot Annapurna III in the Nepalese Himalayas. He had no other major mountain climbs to his credit.

Connor's partners, whom he referred to as the "boys," were Guy Andrews, 20, a San Diego travel agent, and Chuck Bludworth, 25, a Fullerton, Calif. machinist. Andrews was a natural climber, a slight but extremely strong youth who, despite his age, had been on the Annapurna III team. Connor regarded Andrews as a protégé of sorts. Bludworth, though an experienced rock climber and part-time survival-school instructor, had never been on a major mountain expedition and had never climbed above 14,000 feet.

Like most climbers, Connor lived with one eye open for a mountaineering challenge bigger than his last, and an Alpine ascent of the South Face of Aconcagua—"the King of the Andes"—was particularly alluring. It would be accomplishment enough to satisfy his ego and sense of adventure. It also would be convenient, which was an important consideration. The organization of a climb to be made using expedition tactics takes months, sometimes years, and is costly both in terms of time and money. Thus, one of the two principal reasons for the

increase in the number of Alpine-style ascents is that the nonclimbing hassles are considerably reduced. Basically, all Alpine tactics require are two or three climbers with a minimum amount of equipment and enough supplies for a few weeks. There's no hiring of porters, no lugging of supplies up and down the mountain to construct camps that can grow into virtual villages. Expedition tactics have become so sophisticated that the conquering of a major peak is no longer so much a singular human triumph as it is a financial, logistical, organizational and engineering achievement.

The major peaks in the world—those mountains of more than 8,000 meters—were all climbed years ago. What remains? To climb those same peaks using Alpine tactics. That is the second reason for the popularity of Alpine ascents: they represent new challenges. An Alpinist requires more climbing skill, because he has no fixed ropes to secure him and less equipment to rely on, he must also be stronger physically, because he is more exposed to the elements. All climbers are at the mercy of the weather, but for an Alpinist the weather is even more crucial. If a storm strikes, he can only dig a hole in the snow or find makeshift shelter until it passes. If he runs out of food, he must make a decision, continue weak and hungry or retreat. If someone in the party gets sick or injured or simply slows down too much, it becomes a crisis of life-and-death proportions, because there is no permanent base camp to send the man back to. And because they travel light

continued

THE WHITE WIND

continued

and fast, Alpinists have less time to acclimate to the thin air, so they are more subject to altitude illness. The object of Alpine climbing is to give some odds back to the mountain. The mountain has been given back quite a lot. The mortality rate during major, strictly Alpine ascents in recent years has been 20%.

Messner, thought by some climbers to be superhuman, has led the way in Alpine tactics. His 1975 ascent with compatriot Peter Habeler of 26,470-foot Hidden Peak in Kashmir's Karakoram is considered the four-minute mile of Alpine climbing. In 1978 the same twosome reached the summit of Everest without using oxygen, signaling that it is simply a matter of time until an Alpine attempt on Everest will be made. Three months later Messner climbed 26,660-foot Nanga Parbat in the Himalayas alone, a feat that staggered the mountaineering world. He is the only man in the world to have made a solo ascent of an 8,000-meter mountain. Connor was awed by Messner's mountaineering achievements and was particularly inspired by his Hidden Peak ascent. It was this climb that started Connor thinking about an Alpine climb of Aconcagua.

Last fall, discovering he could afford to take a few weeks off over the Christmas holidays, Connor decided to try Aconcagua. He called Andrews, a bachelor unbound by any serious commitments, who jumped at the proposition, especially since Connor would be financing the expedition, except for the other climbers' plane fares. In the interest of safety Connor and Andrews decided they needed a third partner, but finding a qualified climber with the time and money to go on the expedition on such short notice was difficult. Bludworth wasn't an ideal choice—for one thing, neither Connor nor Andrews had ever climbed with him—but they considered him qualified and he was available. Connor and Andrews felt that they could carry Bludworth through any crisis, should it come to that. Thus, the team was formed.

By Thanksgiving the plans were com-



Before starting out on Day Five, Connor chips ice from his boots.

pleted, and after two months of running and lifting weights to get in shape, on Dec. 15 the climbers took a Braniff flight from Los Angeles to Santiago, Chile. Their mood on reaching South America was optimistic and exuberant: "sky high," according to Connor.

"We really felt we were taking on a significant first; there was a real sense of adventure," he says. "We felt pretty special. There was a lot of camaraderie. It showed. At the airports. At dinner together. We were a pretty close group."

Connor wrote in his diary on the climbers' first day in South America:

12/15, Hotel Gran Palace. It's now 7:00 pm & sun is high in the sky. Won't get dark until 10:00 pm. ... What a great climate. Cab driver told me there are 5 cities in Chile (pop. 12 million) that speak nothing but German. I can see why the Germans settled here in such great numbers. ...

A couple of days later he wrote:

I'd forgotten what it was like to be young and impatient. Chuck & Guy are just two forces of light energy bursting at the seams. Focusing intense bursts on the nearest female shape, their rock and roll cassette tapes, each other & their aged leader. It's most difficult at times to get a moment of peace & Mozart around their energy belts.

Early on the morning of Dec. 16, a Sunday, Connor, Andrews and Blud-

worth took a bus 200 miles eastward to Mendoza, Argentina, their 600 pounds of equipment and provisions stacked on the roof of the small bus, much to the dismay of the other passengers and the driver, who kept shouting and cursing at the three gringos locos. With the assistance of the Argentine Association of Mountaineering, the Americans passed smoothly through the bureaucratic procedures for acquiring climbing permits and the like in Mendoza, and on Tuesday they took another bus 100 miles to a ski club at the end of the road. There they rented mules and trekked to the base of Aconcagua. It was on this hike that the South Face first came into view. From Connor's diary:

The Andes have the majestic allure of the Himalayas without the tropical climate at lower elevations. This tends to make the trekking much more pleasant. The Horcones Valley has a stark beauty & grandeur I was unprepared for. Huge tilted strata of ancient sandstone stacked row upon row for your viewing pleasure. Because I now get away only once a year or so, I think each experience is more enriching to me.

The South Face is magnificent. 1/2 times the face of the Eiger, 4 times Half Dome, with ice & altitude thrown in. 2 1/2 times El Cap. The scale is astonishing. There stands 10,000 feet of steep ice & rock & no American has climbed it! Unbelievable!

The climbers stayed 12 days at their base camp (elevation approximately 13,000 feet) to acclimate themselves to the altitude. Mornings were spent checking gear and their physical condition; Connor, who has a keen interest in physiology, monitored blood pressure, pulse rate and lung capacity. In the afternoons they made short climbs to test equipment and to get the feel of the face. They were all itching to begin the climb; the excellent weather they were having wouldn't last much longer, and they felt strong. Bludworth had had dysentery earlier but was better after taking the Lomotil and Tetracycline Connor had

continued

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given him. Connor himself had suffered headaches, but he knew they were simply a result of his body adjusting to the altitude. On Dec. 28 they decided it was time to go and two nights later they bivouacked at the foot of the mountain. At 4:30 a.m. on New Year's Eve, they crawled out of their sleeping bags into the cold, dark Andean air, cooked breakfast and began what would be the greatest challenge of their lives.

"There was an element of unpredictability about the climb," says Connor. "We knew we were sticking our necks out further than we ever had before. It intrigued us and gave us spirit to think that we could do the climb while realizing there was a possibility we couldn't. That's exactly where you want to be on a climb. If you were so certain of success, the spirit of adventure would be removed and you probably wouldn't even go to the effort."

Each man carried a 50-pound pack containing enough food for six days. Messner had written that the South Face could be climbed—using expedition tactics—in two days, though no one ever had. The climbers considered this and carried four days' worth of extra supplies to allow for unforeseen occurrences. Connor had written in his diary on Dec. 28:

I feel more confident than ever we can do it with only one bivouac.

An early morning start was necessary because the lower part of the mountain is avalanche-prone, and the climbers wanted to be through that area before the sun softened the snow. "There was a tremendous amount of snow and ice on the face," Connor says, "and that whole side avalanched constantly. All of those overhanging glaciers avalanche daily. After you've spent a day or a night wondering if millions of tons of ice are going to come tumbling down and crush you, you know how that can take the fun out of it."

The partners made good progress that first day, climbing 2,300 vertical feet to the bottom of a section known as the Broken Towers.

But the closer they got, the more

ominous the Broken Towers appeared. From Connor's diary:

We are on a knife edge at 6:15 pm with no good bivouac ledges in sight. So we decide to push into the Towers, hoping to find a better place to sleep. Chuck did a magnificent lead [climbed first to establish the route] to get to the bivvy [but] we lose! No ledge & no place to cook or lay flat. We bivvy in an ice-filled chimney of rotten rock hanging in harnesses, unable to cook or sleep. The price we pay in loss of energy is at least a day.

The worst effect of spending the night hanging upright in a two-foot-wide chimney was not so much the discomfort as the inability to cook. It is vital that climbers take food and liquid to prevent dehydration and to combat the effects of altitude, especially thickening of the blood. They had not only missed a night's

sleep but had also missed two meals. The next morning they continued to climb the Broken Towers. "Struggling fearfully," according to Connor, it took four hours to reach the top, where they stopped to cook and rest.

Only reluctantly did the Towers release their hold on us. The last 20 feet we had to tiptoe on a knife-edged arête [narrow ridge] with packs on and no belay. I just swallowed my apple, waiting for a death fall. My greatest fear now is that someone will make a tired mistake and we will have an accident.

The basic rule on a mountain like Aconcagua is: don't fall. On a normal rock climb you have the freedom to be daring. Falling is part of the game, and you have equipment to save you in case you do. Besides, friends are near, so you can shout for help. You're not likely to get stuck overnight and freeze. There's no ice running down the cracks. There isn't a 50-pound pack on your back. You're not breathing air so thin it feels like sandpaper in your throat. But at 18,000 feet, the luxury of a mistake is gone, particularly in a small group. On a big climb you simply must not fall.

The party made far less progress the second day than on the first. At the base of the Sandstone Band, a steep cliff more than 1,000 feet high, they carved out a ledge in an ice field and spent the night. From there they could see the summit.

How can it be 4,000 to 4,500 feet above us? My altimeter reads only 17,000 feet. It has to be wrong or we'd have 5,800 feet to go. Nothing makes sense at this altitude. . . . Surely we must be on Mars or at least the Moon. I feel mountain lassitude today. Dull, insipid thought patterns.

The Austrians have a dramatic term for the part of a mountain above 18,000 feet: The Death Zone. At approximately 18,000 feet the effects of altitude become pronounced. Hypoxia, or oxygen starvation, can lead to the three major manifestations of altitude illness: acute mountain sickness, high-altitude pulmonary edema and cerebral edema. Of the three, acute mountain sickness is the

continued



Andreas slowly ascends to the top of French Rib on Day Six

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THE WHITE WIND

continued

most common. It is characterized by headaches, nausea and vomiting, weakness, shortness of breath and impaired judgment, all thought to be the result of the swelling of the brain and the thickening of the blood. Acute mountain sickness is rarely fatal, though; like a bad hangover, its victims sometimes wish it was. Pulmonary edema is characterized by coughing blood, and cerebral edema by blindness and hallucinations; both can lead to coma and death.

Although acute mountain sickness is the least lethal manifestation of altitude illness, it is potentially the most serious when it comes to mountaineering. Climbers worry most about impaired judgment. They can tolerate the discomfort of headaches and nausea, but an inability to make simple decisions may threaten their lives.

"You first begin to notice the brain fade in your reactions," says Connor. "Everything is slowed down, mentally as well as physically. If you saw a crevasse suddenly break open in front of you, it would take you three seconds to react as opposed to half a second when you're down lower. Above 10,000, you're in a race with time. You're trying to get your objective accomplished and get back down while you can still function."

Day Three.

We do four hard pitches [rope lengths] in the Sandstone Band, very hard with packs. Chuck does two hero leads. Then a fairly substantial afternoon storm closes in & it looks like a repeat of the previous epic bivvy. I grab the rope, drop my pack & start scooting up some narrow rock fingers until they run into water ice. It's about 6:00 pm & no bivvy ledge in sight. Where the H—— do you sleep around here? I lead up to the base of the ramp leading to the Ice Balcony (I think; by now I'm not sure of anything on this mountain!) then back down to a powder arête. I pruned Guy a flat place to lay down & so it shall be. I stramp out a platform in the snow & bring the boys up. Both near hypothermia. We get settled about 9:00 pm dead tired & needing liquid & food badly. Force ourselves to cook & melt snow. Without liquid we will be wasted for the next day. The [freeze-dried] shrimp Creole just stuck in my gullet. Each bite had to be forced down

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with numbing fingers and a growing nausea. I'm near nodding off at each bite but I grind it out to within the last couple of bites. Guy develops a bad headache & numb feet. Chuck got snowblind sometime this afternoon so we have to watch him. He is in great pain. Evening views from this space platform over the Central Andes are incredible. Unfortunately we were too concerned with survival to fully appreciate them.

Day Four:

I lead off heading for [a] snow ramp & boom! My right leg disappears into a void. I look down into an evil hole about 10 ft. wide with no bottom. I'm suspended by a rotten snow bridge. With Guy pulling me backward & a frantic ice axe arrest I'm able to roll back out of it. It does block the path to the ramp however so I'm forced to do some rather desperate moves over a steep ice wall to get back onto the ramp. Very hard with pack on! Ramp leads to a notch above a small ice nose. (Great climbing at last!)

We camp in a small cwm [gully] at the base of the French Rib exhausted. About an hour later the bergschrund [crevasse at the head of a glacier] behind us collapses [and generates a small avalanche big enough to bury 10 people] & misses us by 50 meters. We are too tired to celebrate our good fortune.

At this point the climbers were at the base of the route that the French had taken in 1954 and that most subsequent expeditions had used. Connor, Andrews and Bludworth thought they could ascend the French Rib—also called French Shoulder—in a day, and from there it would be a relatively simple trek over the summit plateau to the peak. But Connor had planned to reach the Ice Balcony in one day and it had taken three. Had he underestimated the French Rib as well?

Day Five:

Up and Andy at 10:30 after cold bite of spindrift & ice. We cross two steep bergschrunds (pulling Chuck out of the second one), move up a steep snow face onto the rib itself. Where is the walkoff we are wondering? Christ, there is a 5.8 or 5.9 [out of possible 5.12 degree of difficulty] rock pitch above. Why? Chuck ignores his bout with snowblindness to push the lead about 60 or 70 feet. He gets stuck and Guy goes up to finish the

continued



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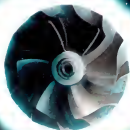
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THE WHITE WIND

continued

pitch. In his haste to find us a decent bivvy Guy does not take enough gear and ends up getting stuck about 50 feet above Chuck. I holler for a retreat to the stance I'm on but they feel a good ledge is above. Almost convinced, I start to jummar [go up a fixed rope] with my pack. As soon as I get 25 feet up to where I can see them, I realize there is no way to haul their packs up this pitch in any case, and we are really strung out with darkness & wind coming on fast. Then Chuck gets panicky & drops a glove which heightens his anxiety (and mine). Since I'm closer to the lower stance, I pass him one of my own along with a sharp order for both men to GET DOWN NOW!!! I beat it back to the stance & begin hacking at the snow with one mauling hand and shout for Guy to help Chuck get down. C.B. is quite blown out by this time & I half expect to see him just plummet in his state of anxiety.

"Chuck was the weakest member of the group, without question," says Connor. "He was in a little bit over his head. This was by far the biggest mountain he had ever been on, and I think he was intimidated by it. But we were prepared for that; I felt Guy and I could deal with a situation of such stress. That was more or less our justification for choosing Chuck in the first place; after all, here was this guy we didn't know who had never been to that altitude, chosen on the basis of availability and eagerness and ability to pay his way—and almost coincidentally on his climbing ability. I would have preferred going with somebody we'd been with before, but we just couldn't find anyone who was available.

"I was irritated with Chuck, but I think being around Guy kind of spoiled me. Here was a 20-year-old, five years Chuck's junior, but with better mountaineering chemistry. Guy had that little necessary ingredient, that mental toughness that—when things get rough up there—keeps you from moaning and groaning about it and telling everybody how hard it is. Christ, everybody knows that, they're there, too. So I was probably expecting Chuck to be just like Guy. Well, that's just not possible. Climbers like Guy are few and far between."

Guy will be one of the best. I can't even describe to him what is in store for him if he continues at his present

pace. Ideal job, ideal physical attributes. Good mental attitude. I only hope to contribute to his development. He can be the Jack Nicklaus of climbing in a few years! Another Messner.

At the moment Andrews was stuck on the face, 50 feet above Bludworth. Fortunately, Andrews' problem was simply too few pions to continue, so he was able to fix a rope and rappel back down to Bludworth. There Andrews talked enough composure into Bludworth so that he, too, was able to rappel down to the ledge Connor had been preparing for their bivouac.

"I would've hated to have seen Chuck try to come down without Guy's help because he was pretty panicked at this point," says Connor. "Sometimes you have to slap a guy and say, 'Hey, if you don't move from there you're gonna die!'"

The Argentinians have a name for the wind that blows on the South Face of Aconcagua: *El Viento Blanco*, the White Wind. It is a twisting wind that roars like a tidal wave when it passes, leaving everything in its wake a frozen white. The three climbers, physically and emotionally drained, were perched on a 3' x 4' ledge in the dark when *El Viento Blanco* engulfed them.

Having survived their own mistakes, it was now a matter of surviving the elements. Because of the darkness and wind it was impossible to carve out a solid bivouac on the ledge, to clear away enough space so they could crawl into their sleeping bags. Their fingers were too numb to light the stove or, worse, to loosen their bootlaces; and with tight boots the circulation in their feet would be cut off, probably resulting in frostbite. "Every time we took our mittens off to try to undo the laces our hands froze," Connor says. "I stuck my feet in Chuck's crotch and he stuck his in mine, and still we couldn't work our boots loose. We knew that if we didn't get those boots undone we were going to lose our toes. We worked at it maybe half an hour, but finally we just said, 'Screw it. Let 'em freeze.' That's pretty remarkable. We're not people of low willpower, and to just sit there and say, 'Well, I guess I'm going to give up my toes because I'm too tired to get my boots off,' is hard to imagine. But when you're at that stage of exhaustion and your

continued



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thinking processes are dulled from lack of oxygen and your fingers are frozen, there isn't anything you can do about it."

Thoughts of retreating never seriously entered the climbers' minds. They felt that trying to rappel down such a difficult face in a weakened condition, with nothing but loose rock and snow against which to anchor their ropes, would have been suicide. Their only choice was to wait until morning and try the rock again.

So they sat hunched up on the tiny ledge at 20,500 feet, legs intertwined and sleeping bags draped over their bodies in a futile attempt to ward off *El Viento Blanco*. For more than 12 hours they huddled, too numb to sleep or talk, until daylight of the sixth day.

"The thing that really startles me is how we were able to get up and climb the next day," says Connor. "I think you just realize you have no choice. You can't stop there and you can't go down. In a way, it's even kind of a mental relief for everything to be immaterial but one goal. You have to climb, and you have to do it yourself. You have to get to the top, and you have to keep from falling."

Day Six

The French Rib is proving to be a bit of a bitch! After the hard rock patch, we brewed up some hot liquid and I led up a 65°-75° [pitch of] loose snow over questionable rock. It just seemed the whole face could easily shed any moment. I move left, right, anywhere to find a stance on this sugar arête. It turns to a knife edge & I forget any thoughts of protection. It is simply not possible. A boulder protrudes from the arête & blocks views of the route above. I clear tons of snow from the rock to get on top & find a perfect saddle seat to belay for the others. Boys came up looking a bit weary so I took the next lead also, up over more endless, unprotected knife edge until blocked by a large rock outcrop. (Still can't get off this bloody French Rib.)

This was the last diary entry. They bivouacked below the rock outcrop that night and the next morning Connor led the climb over it. After one more pitch they topped the French Rib and stood on a plateau that led to the summit. The technical climbing was finished. They had scaled the South Face. All they had to do now was hike and hold out.

Because of the ridges that crossed the plateau, however, they couldn't see the summit and were unsure of how far above it was. For four hours they trekked, hopes soaring as they crested each ridge and sinking when the view from that ridge presented, not the summit, but yet another ridge.

They reached a snow arête about two feet wide, with slopes on each side falling away for thousands of feet. *El Viento Blanco* was building again. They had no ropes, having discarded them after the French Rib when the technical climbing was completed. They would have to wait it out.

"Guy and I more or less made the decision," says Connor. "Chuck was kind of sitting off on a rock howling about his feet being numb and not feeling them too well. So Guy and I discussed it, and as I recall, my exact words were, 'We can't take him over right now.' We had considered the possibility of forcing our way over in the wind, but we didn't know whether this ridge was going to take us five minutes or an hour. And an hour out in that wind would have been fatal for all of us."

When *El Viento Blanco* hadn't ceased by dusk, they bivouacked for the night. It was their second-worst night on the mountain, and again the wind was too heavy for them to cook. In the morning, *El Viento Blanco* was still raging. Connor was the strongest—his size, 6' 2", 180 pounds, and his maturity seemed to sustain him—so he retreated to look for better shelter while Andrews and Bludworth waited. When he found a spot he waved them down, but the two younger men left their packs behind, hypoxia and dehydration having affected their thinking. Connor went back up alone to retrieve the packs. He carried both of the packs down and they bivouacked in preparation for spending their eighth night on the mountain.

"The guys had done a magnificent climb," says Connor. "They had finished the climb the day before. They were off the face. It was just bad timing we hit on the summit plateau. Nobody should be up there for nearly two days after they've done a six-day, 10,000-foot face and gone through what we went through

Nobody should have to put up with that. Nobody should have survived it."

When they rose the ninth morning the weather was good but Bludworth's condition was not. The effects of altitude were outweighing any benefit he was getting from rest and liquid. This was the day they had to reach the summit and head down the north side. They were virtually out of food. They were out of strength.

"We were thinking strictly of survival at this point," says Connor. "We abandoned all our gear, cut our loads down to a bare minimum: just sleeping bags, a brouse sack and a couple of candy bars each. Didn't even carry the ice axes. Every ounce you attached to your body stacked the odds against you. We didn't need much because we knew that the north route had huts on the way down and a lot of people on it. It was just a matter of getting over the top."

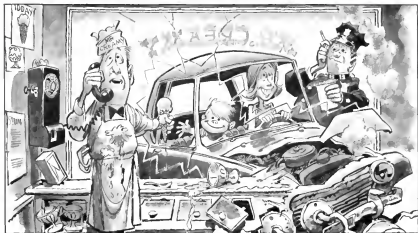
The boys were able to get up and pack their bags. They were able to get themselves dressed. They were able to eat. I got about three quarters of liquid down all of us. If altitude sickness has gotten to a man, usually there will be a sign, like he will sit down and start babbling about something. Neither of these guys had those signs. They were still functioning. They were answering my questions. They were contributing to the discussion. I told them how to pace themselves on this kind of walk. Because it's nontechnical, you might have a tendency to try and race. And especially being young and inexperienced and impatient, that's what you've got to guard against doing. So I told them to take five steps at a time. No more, no less. No matter what kind of terrain, if it flattened out a little bit, stay with your five-step pace. Take five steps and rest, five steps and rest. If you take more, I said, the danger is you might sit down, go to sleep, lose a couple hours. Maybe the weather will close in on you.

"I said, 'O.K., I'm going ahead and break the trail, and you guys follow me.' I told them if they fell behind me, I would wait a while at the summit, and if I didn't see them there, I would meet them at the first hut on the trail back down. They understood and acknowledged those instructions. Fine," they said."

As Connor left the brouse site, he looked over his shoulder. Bludworth was standing next to Andrews, tying

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his boots, Connor gave Andrews the thumbs-up sign, and Andrews returned it. It would be the last time Connor would see either one.

With his line of sight obscured by the ridges on the plateau, Connor was not alarmed when he failed to spot his companions as he walked on. He assumed they were back there, following his footsteps in the snow, perhaps behind that last ridge. After 40 minutes Connor was back at the edge of the arête, which in the absence of wind presented little problem, and in 15 more minutes he reached the summit. For nearly a day all three of them had been only 15 minutes from the summit, and they hadn't known it.

Connor waited for his partners at the summit for another 15 minutes. He was too spent to go back down and look for them, and besides, he was not worried. With the exhilaration at reaching the summit already leaving him, he started searching for the trail down the north side. He could see a hut on the trail nearly 1,500 feet below, but when he headed straight for it, he came to a slope too steep to descend. He worked his way around to the western edge of the summit, where the trail actually began. With four discarded aluminum tent poles he found there he made an arrow pointing to the trail and then headed down.

In his weakened state, Connor kept falling, so he began crawling down the trail on his hands and knees and sliding on his buttocks until the ground became level enough to walk. It took three hours to reach the hut, a 12-foot-long shelter whose roof had blown off long ago. There he collapsed in his sleeping bag, still expecting Andrews and Bludworth to arrive within the hour. Three hours passed; it got dark. It was then that Connor knew they would never come, another exposed night would kill them.

That night *El Viento Blanco* returned. It blew 90 to 100 mph all night long. "I don't think I've ever had a worse night mentally," says Connor. "I couldn't sleep, a result of a combination of exhaustion and depression. There wasn't a damned thing I could do but sit there and listen to the wind howl. I had to sit there and just live with myself."

The next afternoon Connor descended to another hut, where he found three Venezuelan climbers. He told them the

story, and one of them ran down to get a rescue party while the other two assisted Connor to the bottom. But because of bad weather it would be four days before a rescue party could reach the summit. The rescue party found no one, though it did discover that one of the two ice axes—Andrews'—had been taken. They also found the bivouac site as it had been left the final morning, abandoned gear strewn in the snow, including Andrews' boots, which he had finally been unable to get over his swollen feet—he had put on Connor's tennis shoes that last day—and a talisman that Andrews' mother had given him for the climb.

Connor feels certain Andrews took the axe. But he doesn't know where his partners might have gone from there. They might have been blown off the final arête, though Connor thinks that highly unlikely. His best guess is that they reached the summit, failed to see the aluminum arrow pointing to the downward trail, headed directly toward the hut over the steep northern edge and either slipped over that slope or simply got lost in the rocks below. Connor expects their bodies will eventually be found by future climbers.

Connor has lost all his toes to frostbite, as well as the tips of two fingers. He stays at home in Palm Springs with his 18-year-old daughter, who has temporarily moved in to help him with daily chores. He deals with the tragedy one day at a time.

Some days he tries to forget it entirely while planning his next expedition, an Alpine ascent of a Himalayan mountain in 1982, but his missing toes are a constant and gruesome reminder.

Some days he confronts the question of his responsibility. He concedes that he might have been able to prevent the death of his partners by not walking ahead of them that final morning, by moving at their pace rather than his own, so that he could have urged them on if they faltered. After all, it was Connor himself who said, "Sometimes you have to slap a guy and say, 'Hey, if you don't move from there, you're gonna die.'"

Other days he admits that his judgment may have been more affected by the altitude than he realized, that if An-

drews and Bludworth really were on their last legs, he failed to recognize it only because his perceptions were dulled, too. Still, he tells himself, his partners were coherent that final morning, with no signs of serious altitude illness. Besides, Guy was such a super climber—and hadn't he given Connor the thumbs-up sign?

Connor will not allow himself to feel guilt. Maybe some responsibility, but no guilt. It's a paradox, but it's Connor's paradox and his alone to solve.

"No, I can't tell myself if I'd stayed behind they'd be alive today," he says. "That would be a good way to torment myself for the rest of my life."

One man who might understand Connor's paradox is Reinhold Messner. In 1970 he was on a Nanga Parbat expedition that included his younger brother, Günter. It was the first 8,000-meter peak for both of them. They embraced on the summit. But Günter was suffering from exhaustion and acute mountain sickness. As they climbed down he lagged behind Reinhold. An avalanche struck, and Günter was buried. It was three more days before Reinhold made it all the way down, on frostbitten feet. Messner's return to Nanga Parbat in 1978 and his successful solo there—considered a suicidal climb by some—may have been an attempt to settle things with the mountain and/or himself.

When Messner scaled the South Face of Aconcagua in 1974, he, too, had struggled near the summit. From *Bag Walls* comes this account of his climb:

"From block to block, I tumbled up through a rocky couloir [wide gully] having meanwhile left the crest of the ridge itself. About 20 meters below me some rags were fluttering in the wind. It didn't take me long to realize this was the body of a dead climber. He lay with his face towards the valley, just there on the stones as if he had collapsed and not had the strength to pick himself up again."

Ten weeks after Connor's expedition two Americans and an Englishman attempted an Alpine ascent of the South Face. Three thousand feet from the summit the Englishman slipped and fell more than 2,000 feet to his death. The Americans reached the summit and survived, though with frostbitten feet. Theirs, too, was a successful climb.

END

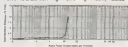


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19TH HOLE THE READERS TAKE OVER

Edited by GAY FLOOD

FRESH KAREEM

Sir

What a delightful, insightful article on Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (A Different Drummer, March 31)! John Papanek has taken one of the most complex figures in sports, cut through the misconceptions and revealed the Abdul-Jabbar I have always wanted to believe was there. It's writing such as this that separates SI from other sports magazines.

TERRY B. KRAFT
Annapolis, Md.

Sir

John Papanek's portrayal of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was one of the best pieces of journalism I've ever read. It was thoughtful, informative and captivating.

It is especially gratifying to see an article of such excellence done on a man of such excellence. One of the least understood players in pro sports, Abdul-Jabbar has no equal on the basketball court.

STEVE CALLANDER
Rochester, Mich.

Sir

Utterly fascinating writing on an intriguing man. I can't decide which is sweeter: a sky hook by Kareem or Papanek's writing.

RON K. BULLER
Austin, Texas

Sir

Your article on Abdul-Jabbar was great, even though I don't really like him.

KEVIN KOOPMANS
Melrose, Minn.

BRAGGING RIGHTS

Sir

Douglas S. Looney's article on former Olympian Don Bragg ("I Don't Make a Good Pet," March 31) was a joyful reading experience. Bragg's poetry may not be in a simple parameter, but his life-style seems to be straight out of Chaucer.

Given his proclivity for blowing cigar smoke at pulmonary bar patrons, making 60-foot leaps into the Mullica River, apring Johnny Weissmuller and Elmo Lincoln on various New Jersey vines and, most of all, repossessing a Mafia car, I think that Bragg missed his true calling. The man has the makings of a perfect NFL linebacker, his 44 years notwithstanding.

Stockton State has itself one helluva man.

ED CRONE
Director of Media Services
New York Football Giants Inc.
East Rutherford, N.J.

Sir

Congratulations on a thoroughly entertain-

ing article. My wife, Posy, and I were with Don Bragg last fall in Atlantic City during a special weekend for Olympic gold medalists. Don did it all, smoked through his nose belched, chewed up his napkin, spit it in his soup and gave his Tarzan call when he wanted the waitress. Never having met Don before, Posy was horrified. I didn't think he had changed a bit since I had seen him 20 years ago—except we watched a TV show on which Don read his poetry and it was unusually good.

TOM COURENIA
Scarsdale, Pa.

Sir

In this day and age it's refreshing to know there are people in the world with a sense of individuality as well as a sense of humor. Your article on Don Bragg had me smiling long after I read it.

JOE HUYSAN
Syracuse, N.Y.

Sir

Speaking for all subdued 40-year-olds, I have just this to say about (Tarzan) Don Bragg's life-style: *Asao-reyao-reyao-reyao!*

KELITH BARNES
Columbus, Ohio

Sir

One picture shows a middle-aged man with a cigar in his nose, and another shows him winging in the trees wearing a Tarzan outfit. Come on, SI! We want to read about people who have grown through their experience in sports, not regressed.

N. THOMAS RICE, M.D.
Lexington, Ky.

Sir

As a former captain of two intramural championship volleyball teams at Stockton State College, I must congratulate Douglas S. Looney on a thoroughly candid article.

There are two schools of thought at Stockton as to where the credit should go for the success of its intramural program. One holds that Don Bragg is truly a genius. The second tends to feel that the success of the program is the result of the athletes' ability to pole-vault themselves over this self-righteous, con-cited and overbearing elf.

LARRY ENRIGHT
Deftord, N.J.

Sir

I was president of Stockton's soccer club when Don Bragg arrived. His first words to me were "Who the — are you?" Our relationship continued downhill from there. I am proud to say that the soccer team survived and flourished despite Bragg.

continued

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19TH HOLE (Continued)

Although we were stumped on your other sides, I will say this Don runs one fantastic intramural sports program that is a valuable aspect of Stockton's campus life.

DAVE SPARKS, KOLBY
Rockport, Mass.

THE MOSCOW GAMES (CONT.)

Regarding your special report on President Carter's call for an Olympic boycott (January "Iron Realities," March 31), it is a pathetic state of affairs when a group of young Americans, many of whom are not old enough to vote, are forced to alter their lives because of the total failure of our government's foreign policy toward the Soviets for the past 35 years.

FRANK X. CHAMPAGNI
West Los Angeles, Calif.

What would Terrence Smith and John Carlos have accomplished had they chosen to boycott the Mexico City Olympics? Nothing. And what did the African nations achieve by failing to appear at the Montreal Games? Very little, except that track fans were deprived of a potentially classic meeting between John Walker and Hilbert Bay.

I think everybody would agree that the Administration's goals are sound, but whether a boycott would contribute toward the attainment of these goals is doubtful at best. As a result, we will punish our athletes to a far greater extent than we will punish the Kremlin.

DEAN KAS
New Orleans

It is a matter of sacrifice vs. selfishness, or the country vs. "me." If our athletes agree that they must sacrifice, the Soviets may realize that President Carter and our entire nation will stand up for what we believe in.

SHAWN SWENSON
Trowton, Md.

LOSER OR VICTIM?

I take exception to Larry Keith's article on Glenn Fletcher (Setting, Waiting and Hoping, March 31). He describes an individual who failed to take advantage of the many educational opportunities offered him and who appears to have no more athletic ability than the average small-college football player. There are lots of guys who are "nice persons to be around" but who do not warrant four pages in your fine magazine. Why did you waste space on this loser?

BOB MILAN
Longwood, Fla.

I suppose your article on Glenn Fletcher was meant to expose the exploitation of college athletes. I know that it was no news to any student who attends a major university. There are Glenn Fetters walking the campuses of schools all over America.

BILL JACKSON
Pittsburgh

Larry Keith's poignant piece on Glenn Fletcher clearly depicts the black male's enslavement to the cruel myth that salvation—the promise of upward socioeconomic mobility—can be realized through athletic prowess. For young Fletcher, achievement in football has become the ultimate ceremony of self-recognition and self-assertion. Nevertheless, of greater import here is the fact that he was victimized and condemned to failure at an early age by the educational system and its representatives.

I strongly urge you to continue reporting on the darker realities of sport in general and intercollegiate athletics in particular. By doing so you will foster a more perceptive understanding of sport in the black community.

PHILIP A. NABE
Columbus, Ohio

STUDENT ATHLETES

YOUR SCORES AND HERE (March 31) on the academic problems of USC athletes illustrates how great the gap between college athletics and academics has become. But let's not blame the schools for "exploiting" the athletes, as one USC administrator put it. If these athletes fail to acquire an education, it's their own fault. They are not forced to enroll in these ridiculous classes. If they want an education, why don't they take challenging courses that will lead to a degree and increase their appeal in the job market? After all, if they can't recognize the importance of a degree, what are they doing in college?

THERRY SANSKY
Pittsburgh

MIRAGE

Paul Zimmerman's references to the word GOD echoed on the hillside near the site of the NFL's annual meetings in Rancho Mirage, Calif. made for an interesting lead into a well-written article that explained a few of the many intricacies of the Raiders' proposed shift south (Whether the Raiders? March 24). However, had Paul looked more closely, he would have seen that what is carved on the hill is not GOD but COD—a reference to the local junior college, College of the Desert. Then again the College of the Desert basketball team recently made it to the semifinals of the state tournament, and many feel God may have had something to do with it.

MIKE DECHONAS
Sports Director
KESQ-TV
Palm Springs, Calif.

It is COD, although College of the Desert's Athletic Director John Morrison says, "Kids are always going up there and changing the C to a G"—L.D.

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